



THE
CHRISTIANS
PATTERN
or
The Imitation
of
CHRIST

Printed by J.R. for John Williams
at y^e Crowne in St Pauls Church yard
1677.

Mary Maining
THE
Christians Pattern,
OR A
DIVINE TREATISE
OF THE
Imitation of Christ.

*Written Originally in Latin, by THOMAS
of KEMPIS, above 200. Years since.*

Faithfully Englished.

And Printed in a large Character for the
benefit of the Aged.

L O N D O N, *l. m.*

Printed for Richard Wellington, at the
Sign of the Lute in St. Pauls Church-
Yard. 1695.



The Contents of the Chapters.

The First Book.

C H A P. I.

O <i>F the Imitation of Christ and contempt of all worldly vanities.</i>	Pag. I
<i>Of the humble conceit of our selves.</i>	3
<i>Of the doctrine of Truth.</i>	6
<i>Of wisdom and providence in our actions.</i>	10
<i>Of the reading of holy Scriptures.</i>	11
<i>Of inordinate affections.</i>	12
<i>Of flying vain hope and pride.</i>	13
<i>That too much familiarity is to be shunned.</i>	15
<i>Of obedience and subjection.</i>	16
<i>Of avoiding superfluity in words.</i>	17
<i>Of the obtaining of peace, and zealous desire of profiting in grace.</i>	19
<i>Of the profit of adversity.</i>	22
<i>Of resisting temptations.</i>	23
<i>Of avoiding rash judgment.</i>	27
<i>Of works done of Charity.</i>	29
<i>Of bearing with the defects of others.</i>	30
<i>Of a retired life.</i>	32
<i>Of the examples of the holy Fathers.</i>	34
<i>Of the exercise of a good and religious per- son.</i>	37
<i>Of the love of solitude and silence.</i>	41
	Of

The Contents.

<i>Of compunction of heart.</i>	46
<i>Of the consideration of humane misery.</i>	49
<i>Of the meditation of death.</i>	54
<i>Of judgement, and the punishment of Sins.</i>	58
<i>Of the zealous amendment of our whole life.</i>	63

The Second Book

C H A P. I

O <i>F the inward life.</i>	79
<i>Of humble submission.</i>	75
<i>Of a good and peaceable Man.</i>	76
<i>Of a pure mind, and upright intention.</i>	78
<i>Of the consideration of ones self.</i>	80
<i>Of the joy of a good conscience.</i>	82
<i>Of the love of Jesus above all things.</i>	84
<i>Of familiar conversation with Jesus.</i>	86
<i>Of the want of all comfort.</i>	89
<i>Of thankfulness for the grace of God.</i>	93
<i>How few the lovers of the Cross of Christ are.</i>	97
<i>Of the high way of the holy Cross.</i>	99

The Third Book.

C H A P. I.

O <i>F the inward speech of Christ unto a faithful soul.</i>	108
<i>That</i>	

The Contents.

<i>That truth speaketh inwardly without noise of words.</i>	110
<i>That the words of God are to be heard with humility, and that many weigh them not.</i>	112
<i>That we ought to live in truth, and humility before God.</i>	116
<i>Of the wonderful effect of divine love.</i>	119
<i>Of the proof of a true Lover.</i>	123
<i>That grace is to be hid under the veil of humility.</i>	126
<i>Of a mean conceit of our selves in the sight of God.</i>	130
<i>That all things are to be referred unto God, as unto the last end.</i>	132
<i>That the world being despised, it is a sweet thing to serve God,</i>	133
<i>That the desires of our heart are to be examined and moderated.</i>	137
<i>Of Patience, and of striving against concupiscence.</i>	139
<i>Of the humble obedience of a subject, according to the example of Christ.</i>	142
<i>Of the secret judgment of God to be considered, lest we be exalted in our good deeds.</i>	144
<i>How we are to stand affected, and what we are to say, in every thing which we desire.</i>	146
<i>That</i>	

The Contents.

That true comfort is to be sought in God alone.	149
That all our care is to be placed in God.	150
That temporal miseries, after the example of Christ, must be born patiently.	152
Of suffering of injuries; and who is proved to be truly patient.	154
Of the acknowledging of our own infirmities; and of the miseries of this life.	157
That we are to rest in God, above all his gifts and benefits.	160
Of the remembrance of the manifold benefits of God.	164
Of four things that bring much peace.	167
Of flying curious inquiry of the life of others.	170
Wherein the firm peace of the heart, and true spiritual profiting consisteth.	172
Of the excellency of a free mind, which humble Prayer sooner gaineth than Reading.	174
That private love most hindreth from the chiefest Good.	176
Against the tongues of slanderers.	179
How we ought to call upon God, and bless him when tribulation draweth near.	180
Of craving the divine aid, and confidence of recovering grace.	182
Of	

The Contents.

<i>Of the contempt of all creatures, to find out the Creator.</i>	186
<i>Of denial of our selves, and forsaking all inordinate desires.</i>	189
<i>Of inconstancy of heart, and of directing our final intentions unto God.</i>	191
<i>That God is sweet, above all things, and in all things, to him that loveth.</i>	193
<i>That there is no security from temptation in this life.</i>	195
<i>Against the vain judgments of Men.</i>	197
<i>Of a full and pure resignation of our selves; for the obtaining freedom of heart.</i>	199
<i>Of good government in outward things, and of recourse to God in dangers.</i>	202
<i>That a Man be not over earnest in his affairs.</i>	204
<i>That a Man hath no good of himself, nor any thing whereof he can glory.</i>	205
<i>Of the contempt of all temporal honors.</i>	208
<i>That our peace is not to be placed in Men.</i>	209
<i>Against vain and secular knowledg.</i>	211
<i>Of not drawing outward things to our selves.</i>	213
<i>That credit is not to be given to all Men; and how prone Man is to offend in words.</i>	214
<i>Of putting our trust in God, when evil words arise.</i>	218
<i>That</i>	

The Contents.

- That all grievous things are to be endured for
life everlasting. 221
- Of the everlasting day, and shortness of this
life. 224
- Of the desire of everlasting life, and how great
rewards are promised to those that fight va-
liantly. 228
- How a disconsolate person ought to offer him-
self into the Hands of God. 233
- That a Man ought to imploy himself in works
of Humility, when strength is wanting for
higher imployments. 238
- That a Man ought to esteem himself not worthy
of comfort, but rather to deserve stripes. 239
- That the grace of God doth not joyn it self with
those that savor of Earthly things. 242
- Of the different motions of Nature, and
Grace. 244
- Of the corruption of Nature, and efficacy of
divine Grace. 250
- That we ought to deny our selves, and imitate
Christ by the Crofs. 254
- That a Man be not too much dejected when he
falleth into some defects. 257
- Of not searching into high matters, and into
the secret judgments of God 259
- That all our hope and trust is to be fixed in God
alone. 265
- The

The Contents.

The Fourth Book.

CHAP, I.

W ith how great reverence Christ ought to be received.	270
That the great goodness and love of God is exhibited to Man in this Sacrament.	277
That it is profitable to communicate often.	281
That many benefits are bestowed upon them that communicate devoutly.	284
Of the dignity of this Sacrament, and Ministerial function,	288
An interrogation of the exercise before Communion.	290
Of the discussing of our own conscience, and purpose of amendment.	291
Of the oblation of Christ on the Cross and resignation of our selves.	294
That we ought to offer up our selves, and all that is ours unto God, and to pray for all.	296
That the holy communion is not lightly to be forborn.	299
That the body of Christ, and the holy Scriptures, are most necessary unto a faithful soul.	304
That	

The Contents.

- That he who is to communicate, ought to prepare himself with great diligence.* 309
- That a devout soul ought to desire with her whole heart, to be united unto Christ in the Sacrament.* 312
- Of the fervent desire of some devout persons to receive the Body of Christ.* 314
- That the grace of devotion is obtained by humility and denial of our selves.* 316
- That we ought to manifest our necessities to Christ, and crave his grace.* 319
- Of fervent love and vehement desire to receive Christ.* 321
- That Man be not a curious searcher of the Sacrament, but an humble follower of Christ, submitting his sense to faith.* 324
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THE FIRST
B O O K.

C H A P. I.

*Of the Imitation of Christ, and contempt of
all wordly vanities.*

HE that followeth me, walketh not
in darkness, saith the Lord. These
are the words of Christ by which
we are admonished, that we ought to
imitate his life and manners, if we will be
truly inlightned, and be delivered from
all blindness of heart. Let therefore our
chiefest endeavor be to meditate upon the
life of Jesus Christ.

2. The doctrine of Christ exceedeth all
the doctrines of holy Men; and he that
hath the Spirit, will find therein an hid-
den Manna. But it falleth out, that ma-

B

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ny, who often hear the Gospel of Christ, are yet but little affected, because they are void of the Spirit of Christ. But whosoever will fully and feelingly understand the words of Christ, must endeavor to conform his life wholly to *the life of Christ*.

3. What will it avail thee to dispute profoundly of the Trinity, if thou be void of humility, and art thereby displeasing to the Trinity? High words surely make a Man neither holy nor just, but a virtuous life maketh him dear to God. I had rather feel compunction, than understand the definition thereof. If thou didst know the whole Bible, and the sayings of all the Philosophers by heart, what would all that profit thee without the love of God, and without grace? Vanity of vanities, and all is vanity, but to love God, and to serve him only. This is the highest wisdom, by contempt of the world to tend towards the Kingdom of Heaven.

4. It is therefore vanity to seek after perishing riches, and to trust in them. It is also vanity to hunt after honors, and to climb to high degree. It is vanity to follow the desires of the flesh, and to labor for that, for which thou mayest afterwards suffer
more

more grievous punishment. Vanity it is to wish to live long, and to be careless to live well. It is vanity to mind only this present life, and not to foresee those things which are to come, It is vanity to set thy love on that which speedily passeth away, and not to hasten thither, where everlasting joy is permanent.

5. Call often to mind that Proverb, *That the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing.* Endeavor therefore to withdraw thy heart from the love of visible things, and to turn thy self to the invisible. For they that follow their sensuality, do stain their own consciences, and loose the favor of God.

C H A P. II.

Of the humble conceit of our selves.

ALL Men naturally desire to know; but what availeth knowledg without the fear of God? Surely, an humble Husbandman that serveth God, is better than a proud Philosopher that neglecting himself laboreth to understand the course of the

heavens. Who so knoweth himself well, groweth more mean in his own conceit, and delighteth not in the praises of Men. If I understood all things in the world, and were not in charity, what would that help me in the sight of God, who will judg me according to my deeds?

2. Cease from an inordinate desire of knowing, for therein is much distraction and deceit. The learned are willing to seem so to others, and to be accounted wise. There be many things, which to know doth little or nothing profit the soul; and he is very unwise, that is intent upon other things than those that may avail him for the welfare of his soul. Many words do not satisfie the soul; but a good life comforteth the mind, and a pure conscience giveth great assurance in the sight of God.

3. How much the more thou knowest, and how much the better thou understandest, so much the more grievously shalt thou therefore be judged, unless thy life be also more holy. Be not therefore extolled in thine own mind for any Art or Science *which thou knowest*, but rather let the knowledg given thee, make thee more humble

humble, and cautious. If thou thinkest that thou understandest and knowest much; know also that there be many things more which thou knowest not. Affect not to be overwise, but rather acknowledg thine own ignorance. Why wilt thou prefer thy self before others, sith there be many more learned and skilful in the Scripture than thou? If thou wilt know or learn any thing profitably; desire to be unknown, and to be little esteemed of *by Man*.

4. The highest and most profitable reading is the true knowledg and consideration of our selves. It is great wisdom and perfection to esteem nothing of our selves, and to think always well and highly of others. If thou shouldst see another openly sin, or commit some hainous offence, yet oughtest thou not to esteem the better of thy self; for thou knowest not how long thou shalt be able to remain in good estate. We are all frail, but thou oughtest to esteem none more frail than thy self.

C H A P. III.

Of the doctrine of truth.

HAppy is he whom Truth by it self doth teach, not by figures and words that pass away; but as it is in it self. Our own opinion and our own sense do often deceive us, and it discerns little. What availeth it to cavil *and dispute* about dark and hidden things; whereas for being ignorant of them we shall not be so much as reprov'd at the day of judgment? It is a great folly to neglect the things that are profitable and necessary, and give our minds to that which is curious and hurtful: we have eyes and see not.

2. And what have we to do with *Genus* and *Species*, *the dry notions of Logicians*? He to whom the Eternal Word speaketh, is deliver'd from a world of unnecessary conceptions. From that one Word are all things, and all speak that one; and this is the Beginning, which also speaketh unto us. No Man without that *word* understandeth or judgeth rightly. He to whom all things are one, he who reduceth all things

things to one, and seeth all things in one ; may enjoy a quiet mind, and remain peaceable in God. O God, who art the Truth, make me one with thee in everlasting charity. It is tedious to me often to read and hear many things : In thee is all that I would have and can desire. Let all Doctors hold their peace ; let all creatures be silent in thy sight ; Speak thou alone unto me.

3. How much the more one is united within himself, and becometh inwardly simple *and pure*, so much the more and higher things doth he understand without labor ; for that he receiveth intellectual light from above. A pure, sincere, and stable Spirit is not distracted, *though it be employed* in many works ; for that, it works all to the honor of God, and inwardly being still and quiet, seeks not it self in any thing it doth. Who hinders and troubles thee more than the unmortified affections of thine own heart ? A good and godly Man first of all disposeth within himself those things which he is outwardly to act ; neither do they draw him to the desires of an inordinate inclination, but he ordereth them according to the prescript of right reason. Who hath a greater combat, than

he that laboreth to overcome himself? This ought to be our endeavor, to conquer our selves, and daily to wax stronger and to make a further growth in holiness.

4. All perfection in this life hath some imperfection mixt with it; and no knowledg of ours is without some darkness. An humble knowledg of thy self is a surer way to God, than a deep search after learning; yet learning is not to be blamed, nor the mere knowledg of any thing whatsoever, to be disliked, it being good in it self, and ordained by God; but a good conscience and a vertuous life is always to be preferred before it. But because many endeavor rather to get knowledg, than to live well; therefore they are often deceived, and reapeither none, or very slender profit of *their labors*.

5. O, if Men bestowed as much labor in the rooting out of vices, and planting of vertues, as they do in moving of questions! Neither would there so much hurt be done, nor so great scandal be given in the world; nor so much looseness be practised in religious Houses. Truly, at the day of Judgment we shall not be examined what we have read, but what we have done;
not

not how well we have spoken, but how religiously we have lived. Tell me now, where are all those Doctors and Masters, with whom thou wast well acquainted, whilst they lived and flourished in learning? Now others possess their livings, and perhaps do scarce ever think of them. In their life-time they seemed something, but now they are not spoken of.

6. O, how quickly doth the glory of the world pass away! O that their life had been answerable to their learning! then had their study and reading been to good purpose. How many perish in this world by reason of vain-learning, who take little care of the serving of God: And because they rather choose to be great than humble, therefore they become vain in their imaginations. He is truly great that is great in charity. He is truly great, that is little in himself, and that maketh no account of any height of honor. He is truly wise, that accounteth all earthly things as dung, that he may gain Christ. And he is truly learned, that doeth the will of God, and forsaketh his own will.

C H A P. IV.

Of wisdom and providence in our actions.

WE must not give ear to every saying or suggestion, but ought warily and leisurely to ponder things according to *the will of God*. But (alas) such is our weakness that we rather often believe, and speak evil of others than good. Those that are perfect Men do not easily give credit to every thing one tells them; for they know that humane frailty is prone to evil, and very subject to fail in words.

2. It is great wisdom not to be rash in thy proceedings, nor to stand stiffely in thine own conceits; as also not to believe every thing which thou hearest, nor presently to relate again to others, what thou hast heard or dost believe. Consult with him that is wise, and conscientious, and seek to be instructed by a better than thy self, rather than to follow thine own inventions. A good life maketh a Man wise according to God, and giveth him experience in many things. How much the humbler one is in himself, and more subject *and resigned*

resigned unto God ; so much the more prudent shall he be in all his affairs, and enjoy greater peace and quiet of heart.

C H A P. V.

Of the reading of holy Scriptures.

TRuth, not eloquence, is to be sought for in holy Scripture. Each part of the Scripture is to be read with the same Spirit wherewith it was written. We should rather search after *our spiritual* profit in the Scriptures, than subtilty of speech. We ought to read plain and devout books as willingly as high and profound. Let not the authority of the Writer offend thee, whether he be of great or small learning ; but let the love of pure truth draw thee to read. Search not who spake this or that, but mark what is spoken.

2. Men pass away , but the truth of the Lord remaineth for ever. God speaks unto us sundry ways, without respect of persons. Our own curiosity often hindreth us in reading of the Scriptures, when as we will examine and discuss that which we should rather pass over without more ado. If thou desire to reap profit, read humbly,
plainly,

plainly, and faithfully ; never desire the estimation of learning ; Inquire willingly, and hear with silence the words of holy Men : dislike not the parables of the Elders, for they are not recounted without cause.

C H A P. VI.

Of inordinate affections.

Whensoever a Man desireth any thing inordinately, he is presently disquieted in himself. The proud and covetous can never rest. The poor and humble in Spirit live together in all peace. The Man that is not yet perfectly dead to himself, is quickly tempted and overcome in small and trifling things. The weak in Spirit, and he that is yet in a manner carnal and prone to sensible things, can hardly withdraw himself altogether from earthly desires. And therefore he is often afflicted, when he goeth about to withdraw himself from them ; and easily falleth into indignation, when any opposition is made against him.

2. And

2. And if he hath followed therein his appetite, he is presently disquieted with remorse of conscience ; for that he yielded to his passion which profiteth him nothing to the obtaining of the peace he sought for. True quietness of heart therefore is gotten by resisting our passions , not by obeying them. There is no peace in the heart of a carnal Man, nor of him that is addicted to outward things, but in the spiritual and fervent Man.

C H A P. VII.

Of flying vain hope and pride.

HE is vain that putteth his trust in Man, or Creatures. Be not ashamed to serve others for the love of Jesus Christ ; nor to be esteemed poor in this world. Presume not upon thy self, but place thy hope in God. Do what lieth in thy power, and God will assist thy good affection. Trust not in thine own knowledg, nor in the subtilty of any living Creature ; but rather in the grace of God, who helpeth the humble, and humbleth those that are self-presuming.

2. Glory

2. Glory not in wealth if thou have it, nor in friends because potent ; but in God who giveth all things, and above all desireth to give thee himself. Extol not thy self for the bigness or beauty of thy body, which is dissolved and disfigured with a little sickness. Take not pleasure in thy natural gifts, or wit, lest thereby thou displease God, to whom appertaineth all the good whatsoever thou hast by nature.

3. Esteem not thy self better than others, lest perhaps in the sight of God, who knoweth what is in Man, thou be accounted worse than they. Be not proud of well-doing ; for the judgment of God is far different from the judgment of Men, and that often offendeth him which pleaseth them. If there be any good in thee, believe that there is much more in others, that so thou mayest conserve humility within thee. It is no prejudice unto thee to debase thy self under all Men ; but it is very prejudicial to thee to prefer thy self before any one Man. The humble enjoy continual peace, but in the heart of the proud is envy, and frequent indignation.

C H A P. VIII.

That too much familiarity is to be shunned.

Lay not thy heart open to every one ; but treat of thy affairs with the wise and such as fear God. Converse not much with young people, and strangers. Flatter not the rich ; neither do thou appear willingly before great personages. Keep company with the humble and plain ones, with the devout, and vertuous ; and confer with them of those things that may edifie. Be not familiar with any Woman ; but in general commend all good Women to God. Desire to be familiar with God alone and his Angels, and fly the knowledge of Men.

2. We must have charity towards all, but familiarity *with all* is not expedient. Sometimes it falleth out, that a Person unknown to us, is much esteemed of, from the good report given him by others ; whose presence notwithstanding is not grateful to the eyes of the beholders. We think sometimes to please others by our company, and we rather distaste them with
those

those bad qualities which they discover in us.

C H A P. IX.

Of obedience and subjection.

IT is a great matter to live in obedience, to be under a superior, and not to be at our own disposing. It is much safer to obey, than to govern. Many live under obedience, rather for necessity than for charity; such are discontented, and do easily repine *and murmur*. Neither can they attain to freedom of mind, unless they willingly and heartily put themselves under obedience for the love of God. Go whither thou wilt, thou shalt find no rest, but in humble subjection under the government of a Superior. The imagination and change of places have deceived many.

2. True it is, that every one willingly doth that which agreeth with his own sense *and liking*; and is apt to affect those most that are of his own mind: But if God be amongst us, we must sometimes for peace sake cease to adhere to our own opinion.

Who

Who is so wise that he can fully know all things; Trust not therefore to thine own opinion; but be willing to hear the judgment of others. If that which thou thinkest be not amiss, and yet thou submittest it for God, and followest the opinion of another, it shall be better for thee.

3. I have often heard, that it is safer to hear and take counsel, than to give it. It may also fall out, that each ones opinion may be good; but to refuse to yield to others when as reason or cause requireth it, is a sign of pride and stiffness.

C H A P. X.

Of the avoiding superfluity in words.

FLy the tumultuousness of the world as much as thou canst; for the talk of worldly affairs hindreth very much, although they be recounted with sincere intention; for we are quickly defiled, and enthralled with vanity. I could wish that I had oftentimes held my peace, when I have spoken; and that I had not been in company. Why do we so willingly speak
C and

and talk one with another, when notwithstanding we seldom return to silence without hurt of conscience? The cause why we so willingly talk, is for that by discoursing one with another, we seek to receive comfort one of another, and desire to ease our mind overwearied with sundry thoughts; and we very willingly talk and think of those things which we most love and desire; or of those which we feel most contrary and troublesom unto us.

2. But alas, oftentimes in vain, and to no end; for this outward comfort is the cause of no small loss of inward and divine consolation. Therefore we must watch and pray, lest our time pass away idly. If it be lawful and expedient for thee to speak, speak those things that may edifie. An evil custom and neglect of our own good doth give too much liberty to inconsiderate speech: Yet religious discourses of spiritual things do greatly further our spiritual growth, especially where persons of one mind and spirit be gathered together in God.

C H A P. XI.

*Of the obtaining of peace, and zealous desire
of profit in grace.*

WE might enjoy much peace, if we would not busie our selves with the words and deeds of other Men, which appertain nothing to our charge. How can he live long in peace, that thrusteth himself into the cares of others, that seeks occasions abroad, that little or seldom recollecteth himself within his own breast? Blessed are the single-hearted; for they shall injoy much peace.

2. What is the reason, why some of the Saints were so perfect and contemplative? Because they labored to mortifie themselves wholly to all earthly desires; and therefore they could with their whole heart give themselves to God, and be free for holy retirement. We are too much led by our passions, and too solicitous for transitory things. We also seldom overcome any one vice perfectly, and are not inflamed with a fervent desire to grow better every day; and therefore we remain cold and scarce warm in Religion.

3. If we were perfectly dead unto our selves, and not entangled within our own breasts; then should we tast divine things, and have some acquaintance with heavenly enjoyments. The greatest and indeed the whole impediment is, for that we are not disentangled from our passions and lusts, neither do we endeavor to enter into that path of perfection, which the Saints have walked before us; and when any small adversity befallerh us, we are too quickly dejected, and turn our selves to humane comforts.

4. If we would endeavor like Men of courage to stand in the battel; surely we should feel the favorable assistance of God from Heaven. For he who giveth us occasion to fight, to the end we may get the victory, is ready to succor those that fight *manfully*, and do trust in his grace. If we esteem our progress in religious life to consist only in some exterior observances, our devotion will quickly be at an end. But let us lay the Axe to the root, that being freed from passions, we may find rest to our souls.

5. If every year we would root out one vice, we should sooner become perfect Men. But now oftentimes we perceive it goes
contrary,

contrary, and that we were better and purer at the beginning of our conversion, than after many years of our profession. Our fervor and profiting should increase daily; but now it is accounted a great matter, if one can retain but some part of his first zeal. If we would but a little force our selves at the beginning, then should we be able to perform all things afterwards with ease and delight.

6. It is a hard matter to leave that to which we are accustomed, but harder to go against our own wills. But if thou dost not overcome little and easie things, how wilt thou overcome harder things? Resist thy inclination in the very beginning, and unlearn evil customes, lest perhaps by little and little they draw thee to greater difficulty. O, if thou didst but consider how much inward peace unto thy self, and joy unto others thou shouldst procure by demeaning thy self well, I suppose thou wouldst be more careful of thy spiritual profiting.

C H A P. XII.

Of the profit of adversity.

IT is good that we have sometimes some troubles and crosses; for they often make a Man enter into himself, and consider that he is here in banishment, and ought not to place his trust in any worldly thing. It is good that we be sometimes contradicted; and that there be an evil or a lessening conceit had of us; and this, although we do and intend well. These things help often to the attaining of humility, and defend us from vain glory; for then we chiefly seek God for our inward witness, when outwardly we be contemned by Men, and when there is no credit given unto us.

2. And therefore a Man should settle himself so fully in God, that he need not to seek many comforts of Men. When a good Man is afflicted, tempted, or troubled with evil thoughts; then he understandeth better the great need he hath of God, without whom he perceiveth he can do nothing that is good. Then also he sorroweth
eth

eth, lamenteth, and prayeth by reason of the miseries he suffereth. Then he is weary of living longer, and wisheth that death would come, that he might be dissolved and be with Christ. Then also he well perceiveth, that perfect security and full peace cannot be had in this world.

C H A P. XIII.

Of resisting temptations.

SO long as we live in this world we cannot be without tribulation and temptation; for as it is written in *Job*, The life of Man is a warfare upon earth. Every one therefore ought to be careful about his temptations, and to watch in prayer, lest the Devil find an advantage to deceive him; who never sleepeth, but goeth about seeking whom he may devour. No Man is so perfect and holy, but hath sometimes temptations; and we cannot be altogether without them.

2. Temptations are often profitable to Men, though they be troublesome and grievous; for in them Man is humbled,

purged, and instructed. All the Saints have passed and profited through many tribulations and temptations; and they that could not bear temptations, became reprobate, and fell away. There is no order so holy, nor place so secret, where there be not temptations, or adversities.

3. There is no Man that is altogether free from temptations whilst he liveth on earth; for in our selves is the root thereof, being born with inclination to evil. When one temptation or tribulation goeth away, another cometh, and we shall ever have something to suffer, because we are fallen from the state of our felicity. Many seek to flee temptations, and do fall more grievously into them. By flight alone we cannot overcome, but by patience and true humility we become stronger than all our enemies.

4. He that only avoideth them outwardly, and doth not pluck them up by the roots, shall profit little; yea temptations will the sooner return unto him, and he shall feel himself in a worse case than before. By little and little, and by patience with longanimity (through Gods help) thou shalt more easily overcome, than with violence

violence and thine own importunity. Often take counsel in temptations, and deal not roughly with him that is tempted; but give him comfort as thou wouldst wish to be done to thy self.

5. The beginning of all evil temptations is inconstancy of mind, and little confidence in God. For as a Ship without a stern is tossed to and fro with the waves; so the Man that is negligent, and leaveth his purpose is many ways tempted. Fire trieth Iron, and temptation a just Man. We know not oftentimes what we are able to do, but temptations do shew us what we are. We must be watchful, especially in the beginning of the temptation; for the enemy is then more easily overcome, if he be not suffered to enter the door of our hearts, but be resisted without the gate at his first knock. Wherefore one said, *Obsta principiis*, &c. Withstand the beginnings, for an after-remedy comes often too late. First there cometh to the mind a bare cogitation of evil, then a strong imagination thereof, afterward delight and an evil motion, and then consent; and so by little and little our wicked enemy getteth entrance, whilst he is not resisted in the beginning. And how much

much the longer one is negligent in resisting, he becomes daily so much the weaker in himself, and the enemy stronger against him.

6. Some suffer greatest temptations in the beginning of their conversion ; others in the latter end ; others again are much troubled almost through the whole time of their life. Some are but easily tempted according to the wisdom and equity of the divine appointment, which weigheth the states and deserts of Men, and ordaineth all things for the welfare of his chosen ones.

7. We ought not therefore to despair when we are tempted, but so much the more fervently to pray unto God, that he will vouchsafe to help us in all tribulations; who surely, according to the words of *St. Paul*, will give with the temptation such issue, that we may be able to bear it. Let us therefore humble our selves under the hand of God in all temptations and tribulations, for he will save and exalt the humble in spirit.

8. In temptations and afflictions, Man is proved how much he hath profited ; and his reward is thereby the greater, and his graces do more eminently shine forth. Neither

ther is it any such great thing if a Man be devout and fervent, when he feeleth no affliction ; but if in time of adversity he bear himself patiently, there is hope then of great proficiency in grace. Some are kept from great temptations, and are often overcome in small ones which do daily occur ; to the end that being humbled, they may never presume on themselves in great matters, who are baffled in so small things.

C H A P. XIV.

Of avoiding rash judgment.

TURN thine eyes unto thy self, and beware thou judg not the deeds of other Men. In judging of others a Man laboreth in vain, often erreth, and easily sinneth ; but in judging and discussing of himself, he always laboreth fruitfully. We often judg of things according as we fancy them ; for private affection bereaves us easily of true judgment. If God were always the pure intention of our desire, we should not be so much troubled, through the repugnance of our carnal mind.

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2. But oftentimes something lurketh within, or elle occurreth from without, which draweth us after it. Many secretly seek themselves in their actions, and know it not. They seem also to live in good peace of mind, when things are done according to their will and opinion ; but if things succeed otherwise than they desire, they are straightways troubled and much afflicted. The diversities of judgments and opinions, cause oftentimes dissentions between religious and devout Persons, between Friends and Countrymen.

3. An old custom is hardly broken, and no Man is willing to be led further than himself can see. If thou dost more rely upon thine own reason or industry, than upon that power which brings thee under the obedience of Jesus Christ, it will be long before thou become illuminated ; for God will have us perfectly subject unto him and that being enflamed with his love, we transcend the narrow limits of humane reason.

C H A P. XV.

Of works done of Charity.

FOr no worldly thing, nor for the love of any Man, is any evil to be done ; but yet, for the profit of one that standeth in need, a good work is sometimes to be intermitted without any scruple, or changed also for a better. For by doing this, a good work is not lost, but changed into a better. The exterior work without charity profiteth nothing ; but whatsoever is done of charity, be it never so little and contemptible in the sight of the world, it becomes wholly fruitful. For God weigheth more with how much love one worketh, than how much he doeth. He doeth much, that loveth much.

2. He doeth much, that doeth a thing well ; he doeth well that rather serveth the community, than his own proper will. Oftentimes it seemeth to be charity, and it is rather carnality ; because natural inclination, self-will, hope of reward, and desire of our own interest will seldom be away.

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3. He that hath true and perfect charity, seeketh himself in nothing; but only desireth in all things that the glory of God should be exalted. He also envieth none; because he affecteth no private good; neither will he rejoyce in himself: but wisheth above all things to be made happy in the enjoyment of God. He attributeth nothing that is good to any Man, but wholly referreth it unto God, from whom as from the fountain all things proceed; in whom finally all the Saints do rest as in their highest fruition. O, he that had but one spark of true charity, would certainly discern that all earthly things be full of vanity.

C H A P. XVI.

Of bearing with the defects of others.

THose things that a Man cannot amend in himself or in others, he ought to suffer patiently, until God order things otherwise. Think that perhaps it is better so for thy trial and patience, without which all our good deeds are not much to be esteemed.

esteemed. Thou oughtest to pray notwithstanding when thou hast such impediments, that God would vouchsafe to help thee, and that thou mayest bear them patiently.

2. If one that is once or twice warned will not give over, contend not with him: but commit all to God, that his will may be fulfilled, and his name honored in all his servants, who well knoweth how to turn evil into good. Endeavor to be patient in bearing with the defects and infirmities of others, of what sort soever they be; for that thy self also hast many things which must be suffered by others. If thou canst not make thy self such an one as thou wouldst, how canst thou expect to have another in all things to thy liking; We would willingly have others perfect, and yet we amend not our own faults.

3. We will have others severely corrected, and will not be corrected our selves. The large liberty of others displeaseth us; and yet we will not have our desires denied us. We will have others kept under by strict laws; but in no sort will our selves be restrained. And thus it appeareth, how seldom we weigh our neighbor in the same ballance

ballance with our selves. If all Men were perfect, what should we have to suffer of our neighbor for God?

4. But now God hath thus ordered it, that we may learn to bear one anothers burden; for no Man is without fault, no Man but hath his burden, no Man sufficient of himself, no Man wise enough of himself; but we ought to bear with one another, comfort one another, help, instruct, and admonish one another. Occasions of adversity best discover how great virtue or strength each one hath; for occasions make not a Man frail, but do shew what he is.

CHAP. XVII.

Of a retired life.

THou must learn to break thy own will in many things, if thou wilt have peace and concord with others. It is no small matter to dwell in a religious community, and to converse therein without complaint, and to persevere therein faithfully until death. Blessed is he that hath there

there lived well, and ended happily. If thou wilt persevere in grace as thou oughtest, and profit in virtue, esteem thy self as a banished Man, and a pilgrim upon earth. Thou must be contented for Christs sake to be esteemed as a fool in this world, if thou desire to lead an holy life.

2. The wearing of a religious habit, and shaving of the crown, do little profit; but change of manners, and perfect mortification of passions, make a true religious Man. He that seeketh any thing else but God, and the salvation of his soul, shall find nothing but tribulation and sorrow. Neither can he remain long in peace, that laboreth not to be the least, and subject to all.

3. Thou camest to serve, not to rule. Know that thou wast called to suffer and to labor, not to be idle, or to spend thy time in talk. Here therefore Men are proved as gold in the furnace. Here no Man can stand, unless he humble himself with his whole heart for the love of God.

C H A P. XVIII.

Of the examples of the holy Fathers.

CONsider the lively examples of the holy Fathers, in whom true perfection and religion shined; and thou shalt see how little it is, and almost nothing, which we do now in these days. Alas, what is our life if it be compared to them ! The Saints and Friends of Christ served the Lord in hunger and thirst, in cold and nakedness, in labor and weariness, in watchings and fastings, in prayer and holy meditations, in persecutions and many reproaches.

2. O how many and grievous tribulations suffered the Apostles, Martyrs, Confessors, Virgins, and all the rest that endeavored to follow the steps of Christ ! They hated their lives in this world, that they might possess their souls in everlasting life. O how strict and self-renouncing a life, led those holy Fathers in the wilderness ! How long and grievous tentations suffered they ! How often were they assaulted by the enemy ! What frequent and fervent prayers offered they to God ! How rigorous an abstinence did

did they daily use ! How great zeal and care had they of their spiritual proficiency ! How strong a combat had they for the overcoming of their lusts ! How pure and upright intentions kept they unto God ! In the day they labored, and in the night they attended to continual prayer ; although when they labored also, they ceased not from mental prayer.

3. They spent all their time with profit ; every hour seemed short for the service of God ; and by reason of the great sweetness they felt in contemplation, they forgot the necessity of corporal refreshments. They renounced all riches, dignities, honors, friends, and kinsfolk ; they desired to have nothing which appertained to the world ; they scarce took things necessary for the sustenance of life ; they grieved to serve their bodies even in necessity. They were poor in earthly things, but very rich in grace and virtues. Outwardly they wanted, but inwardly they were refreshed with grace and divine consolation.

4. They were strangers to the world, but near and familiar friends to God. They seemed to themselves as nothing, and despicable to this present world ; but they

were precious and beloved in the eyes of God. They were grounded in true humility, lived in simple obedience, walked in love and patience : and therefore they profited daily in spirit, and obtained great grace in Gods sight. They were given for an example to all religious Men ; and they should more provoke us to endeavor after spiritual proficiencies, than the number of the lukewarm livers should prevail to make us remiss.

5. O how great was the fervor of all religious persons in the beginning of their holy institution ! How great was their devotion to prayer ! What ambition to excel others in virtue ! How exact discipline then flourished ! How great reverence and obedience, under the rule of their Superiors, observed they in all things ! Their footsteps yet remaining, do testifie that they were indeed holy and perfect Men ; who fighting so valiantly trodd the world under their feet. Now he is greatly accounted of, that transgresseth not, and that can with patience endure that which he hath undertaken.

6 O the coldness and negligence of our times ! that we so quickly decline from
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our first fervor, and are come to that pass, that very sloth and coldness of spirit maketh our own life tedious unto us. Would to God the desire to profit in virtue did not wholly sleep in thee, who hast often seen the many examples of devout and religious persons.

C H A P. XIX.

Of the exercise of a good and religious person.

THe life of a good and religious person ought to be adorned with all virtues; that he may inwardly be such as outwardly he seemeth to Men. And with reason thou oughtest to be much more within, than is perceived without. For God beholdeth us, whom we ought most highly to reverence wheresoever we are, and walk in purity like Angels in his sight. Daily should we renew our purposes, and stir up our selves to fervor, as though this were the first day of our conversion; and to say, Help me my God in this my good purpose, and in thy holy service; and

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grant that I may now this day begin perfectly ; for that which I have done hitherto is nothing.

2. According to our purpose shall be the success of our spiritual profiting; and much diligence is necessary to him that will profit much. And if he that firmly purposeth often faileth, what shall he do that seldom purposeth any thing, or with little resolvedness : It may fall out sundry ways that we leave off our purpose ; and the light omission of *spiritual* exercises seldom passes without some loss *to our souls*. The purpose of just Men depends upon Gods grace, and not upon their own wisdom ; upon whom they always rely for whatsoever they take in hand. For Man doth purpose, but God doth dispose ; neither is the way of Man in himself.

3. If an accustomed exercise be sometimes omitted, either for some act of piety, or profit to my brother ; it may easily afterwards be recovered again. But if out of a slothful mind, or out of carelessness we lightly forsake the same, it is a great offence against God, and will be found to be prejudicial to our selves. Let us do the best we can, we shall easily fail in many things; yet
must

must we always purpose some certain course, and especially against those vices which do most of all molest us. We must diligently search into, and set in order both the outward and the inward Man, because both of them are expedient to our coming forward in godliness.

4. If thou canst not continually recollect thy self, yet do it sometimes, at the least once a day, to wit, at morning or at night. In the morning fix thy good purpose; and at night examine thy self what thou hast done, how thou hast behaved thy self in thought, word, and deed; for in these perhaps thou hast often offended both God and thy neighbor. Gird thy loyns like a Man against the vile assaults of the Devil; bridle thy riotous appetite, and thou shalt be the better able to keep under all the unruly motions of the flesh. Be thou at no time idle altogether, but either reading, or writing, or praying, or meditating, or endeavoring something for the publick good. As for bodily exercises they must be used with great discretion, neither are they to be practised of all Men alike.

5. The exercises that are not common are not to be exposed to publick view; for

things private are practised more safely at home. Nevertheless thou must beware thou neglect not that which is common, and be more ready for what is private. But having fully and faithfully accomplished all thou art bound and enjoined to do, if thou hast any spare time, betake thee to thy self, as thy devotion shall require. All cannot use one kind of exercise, but one is more convenient for this person, another for that; according to the seasonableness of times also, divers exercises are fitting. Some sute better with us on working days, other on holy days; some we have need of in the time of temptation, and of others in time of peace and quietness. Some we mind when we are pensive, and other some when we rejoyce in the Lord.

9. When chief Festivals draw near, good exercises are to be renewed, and the prayers of holy Men more fervently to be implored. From feast to feast we should make some good purpose, as though we were then to depart out of this world, and to come to the everlasting feast *in Heaven*. Therefore ought we carefully to prepare our selves at holy times, and to live more devoutly

devoutly, and to keep more exactly all things that we are to observe, as though we were shortly at Gods hands to receive the reward of our labors.

7. But if it be deferred, let us think with our selves that we are not sufficiently prepared, and unworthy yet of so great glory which shall be revealed in us in due time; and let us endeavor to prepare our selves better for our departure. *Blessed is that servant* (saith St. Luke the Evangelist) *whom when his Lord cometh he shall find watching: Verily I say unto you, he shall make him ruler over all his goods.*

C H A P. XX.

Of the love of solitude and silence.

SEEK a convenient time to retire into thy self, and meditate often upon Gods benefits. Meddle not with curiosities; but read such things which may rather yield compunction to thy heart, than busy thy head. If thou wilt withdraw thy self from speaking vainly and from gadding idly, as also from harkening after novel-
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ties and rumors, thou shalt find leisure sufficient and convenient enough to meditate on good things. The greatest Saints avoided the society of Men, when they could conveniently, and did rather choose to serve God, and to live to God, in secret.

2. One said, As oft as I have been among Men, I returned home less a Man than I was before; and this we find true, when we talk long together. It is easier not to speak a word at all, than not to speak more words than we should: It is easier for a Man to keep home than to keep himself well when he is abroad. He therefore that intends to attain to the more inward and spiritual things of Religion, must with Jesus depart from the multitude and press of people. No Man safely doth go abroad, but he which gladly can abide at home; no Man speaks securely, but he that holds his peace willingly. No Man ruleth safely, but he that is ruled willingly; no Man securely doth command, but he that hath learned readily to obey,

3. No Man rejoyceth securely, unless he hath within him the testimony of a good conscience; and yet the security of the Saints was always full of the fear of God.

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Neither were they less careful and humble in themselves, for that they shined outwardly with grace and great virtues. But the security of the wicked riseth out of pride and presumption, and in the end it deceiveth them. Although thou seem to be a good religious Man, or a devout Hermit, yet promise not thy self security in this life.

4. Oftentimes those have fallen into greatest danger by overmuch self-confidence, who have been in greatest esteem and account amongst Men. Wherefore it is more profitable to many not to be altogether free from temptations, but to be often assaulted, lest they should be too secure, and so perhaps be puffed up with pride; or too freely give themselves to worldly comforts. O how good a conscience should he keep, that would never seek after transitory joy, nor entangle himself with the things of this world! O how great peace and quietness should he possess, that would cut off all vain solicitude, and think only upon divine things, and such as are profitable for his soul, and would place all his confidence in God!

5. No Man is worthy of heavenly comfort,

fort, unless he have diligently exercised himself in holy compunction. If thou desirest true contrition of heart, enter into thy closet, and shut out the tumults of the world, as it is written, In your chambers be ye grieved. In thy closet thou shalt find what abroad thou shalt often lose; the more thou visitest thy closet, the more thou wilt like it; the less thou comest thereunto, the more thou wilt loth it. If in the beginning of thy amendment thou art content to remain in it, and keep it well, it will afterwards be to thee a dear friend, and a most pleasant comfort.

6. In silence and in stillness a religious soul advantageth her self and learneth the mysteries of holy Scripture. There she findeth rivers of tears, wherein she may every night wash and cleanse her self; that she may be so much the more familiar with her Creator, by how much the further off she liveth from all worldly disquiet. Who so therefore withdraweth himself from his acquaintance and friends, God with his holy Angels will draw near unto him. It is better for a Man to live privately and to have regard to himself, than to neglect his soul, though he could work wonders in
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the world. It is very commendable in a religious person ; seldom to go abroad, and to be unwilling to see others.

7. Why art thou desirous to see that which is unlawful for thee to enjoy ? For the world passeth away and the lusts thereof. Our sensual desires draw us to rove abroad ; but when the time is past, what carriest thou home with thee but a burdened conscience and distracted heart ? A merry going out bringeth commonly a mournful return home ; and a joyful evening makes *many times* a sad morning. So all carnal joy enters gently, but in the end it bites and stings to death. What canst thou see elsewhere, which thou canst not see here ? Behold the Heaven and the Earth and all the Elements ; for of these are all things created.

8. What canst thou see any where that can long continue under the Sun ? Thou thinkest perchance to satiate thy self, but thou canst never attain it. Shouldst thou see all things present before thine eyes, what were it but a vain and *unprofitable* sight ? Lift up thine eyes to God in the highest, and pray him to pardon all thy sins and negligencies. Leave vain things
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to the vain, but be thou intent upon those things which God commandeth thee. Shut thy door upon thee, and call unto thee Jesus thy beloved. Stay with him in thy closet; for thou shalt not find so great peace any where else. Hadst thou not gone abroad and hearkened to idle rumors, thou mightest the better have enjoyed quietness. But sith thou delightest sometimes to hear novelties, it is fit thou suffer for it some unquietness of mind.

C H A P. XXI.

Of compunction of heart.

IF thou wilt make any progress in godliness, keep thy self in the fear of God, and affect not too much liberty. Keep in awe all thy senses under *the severe rod of discipline*, and give not thy self over to foolish mirth. Give thy self to compunction of heart, and thou shalt gain much devotion thereby; compunction bringeth much good, which dissoluteness is wont quickly to destroy. It is a wonder that any Man can ever perfectly rejoyce in this life, if he
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duly consider his banishment, and thoroughly weigh the many perils wherewith his soul is invironed.

2. The levity of our minds and the little care we have of our faults, maketh us insensible of the sorrows of our souls; but oftentimes we vainly laugh, when we have just cause to weep. There is no true liberty nor right gladness, but in the fear of God accompanied with a good conscience. Happy is he that can avoid all distracting impediments, and bring himself to the union of holy compunction. Happy is he that can abandon all that may defile or burthen his conscience. Resist manfully; one custome overcometh another. If thou canst let others alone in their matters, they likewise shall not hinder thee in thine.

3. Busie not thy self in matters which appertain to others; neither do thou trouble thy self with the affairs of thy Betters. Still have an eye to thy self first, and be sure more especially to instruct thy self before all thy loving friends. If thou hast not the favor of Men, be not grieved at it; but take this to heart, that thou dost not carry thy self so warily and circumspectly as it becometh

cometh the Servant of God, and a devout religious Man. It is better oftentimes and safer that a Man hath not many consolations in this life, especially such as are agreeable to the flesh. But that we have not at all or do very seldom tast divine consolations, the fault is ours, because we seek not after compunction of heart, nor do altogether forsake the vain and outward comforts *of this world*.

4. Know that thou art unworthy of divine consolation, and that thou hast rather deserved much tribulation. When a Man hath perfect contrition, then is the whole world grievous and bitter unto him. A good Man findeth always sufficient cause of mourning and weeping; for whether he consider his own or his neighbors estate, he knoweth that none liveth here without tribulation. And by how much a Man looks narrowly into himself, by so much the more he sorroweth. Our sins and wickednesses wherein we are so enwrapt, that we can seldom apply our selves to heavenly contemplations, do Minister unto us matter of most just sorrow and inward compunction.

5. Didst thou oftner think of thy death,
than

than of thy living long, there is no question but thou wouldst be more careful to amend. I believe thou wouldst willingly undergo any labor or sorrow in this world, and not be afraid of the greatest austerity, if thou didst consider within thy self the infernal pains in the other world. But because these things enter not to the heart, and we still love those things only that delight us, therefore it is we remain very dull and cold in religion.

6. It is often our want of spirit which maketh our miserable body so easily complain. Pray therefore unto the Lord with all humility, that he will vouchsafe to give thee the spirit of compunction. And say with the prophet, Psal. 80, *Feed me, O Lord, with the bread of tears, and give me plenteousness of tears to drink.*

C H A P. XXII.

Of the consideration of humane misery.

Miserable thou art wheresoever thou be, or whithersoever thou turnest, unless thou turn thy self unto God. Why
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art thou troubled when things succeed not as thou wouldest or desirest? For who is he that hath all things according to his mind? Neither I nor thou, nor any Man upon earth; there is none in this world, be he King or Pope, without some tribulation or other. Who is then in the best case *or condition*? even he who can suffer something for God.

2. Many weak and infirm ones can say, Behold what an happy life hath such an one, how wealthy, how great he is, in how great power and dignity! But lift up thine eyes to the riches of heaven, and thou shalt see that all the goods of this life are nothing so to be accounted of. They are very uncertain, rather burdensome than otherwise, because they are never enjoyed without carefulness and fear. Mans happiness consisteth not in having abundance of wealth, but a mean estate should content him; it is truly misery enough even to live upon the earth. The more a Man would be spiritual, the more bitter to him is this present life; because he seeth more clearly and perceiveth more sensibly the defects of humane corruption. For to eat and to drink, to sleep and to watch, to labor and to rest,
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and to be subject to other necessities of nature is doubtless a great misery and affliction to a religious Man, that would gladly be free and delivered from all sin.

3. For the inward Man is much oppressed with these *outward* and corporal necessities whilest we live in this world. Therefore the holy Prophet prayeth with great devotion to be delivered from them, saying, *Bring me, O Lord, out of my necessities.* But wo be to them that know not their own misery; and a greater wo to them that love this miserable and corruptible life. And some there be so much dote upon it, that although with great labor and pains they can scarce get mere necessities, yet could they live here always, they would care nothing at all for the Kingdom of Heaven.

4. O how foolish are these and faithless in their hearts, who lye so deeply sunk in the earth, that they can mind or relish nothing but carnal things! But miserable wretches as they are, they shall in the end feel to their cost how vile and how nothing that was which they loved: Whereas the Saints of God, and all the devout friends of Christ respected not those things which

pleased the flesh, and which flourished in this life, but longed for the everlasting riches with their whole hope and desire. Their whole desire was carried upward to things durable and invisible, **that the** desire of things visible might not draw them to things below. O Brother, lose not thy hope of coming forward in godliness; there is yet time, the hour is not yet past

5. Why wilt thou defer thy good purpose from day to day? Arise and begin in this very instant, and say, Now is the time to be doing, now is the time to be striving, now is the best time to amend my self. When thou art ill at ease and much troubled, then is the time of deserving best; thou must pass through fire and water before thou comest to the place of refreshing. Unless thou dost earnestly force thy self, thou shalt never get the victory over sin; so long as we carry about us this frail body of ours, we can never be without sin, or live without trouble and sorrow. We would gladly be quiet and freed from all misery, but seeing by sin we have lost our innocency, we have together with that lost also the true felicity. Therefore it becomes us to have patience, and to wait for

for the mercy of God, till this our iniquity be put away, and this mortality of ours be swallowed up of life.

6. O how great is humane frailty, which is always prone to evil ! to day thou **confessest** thy sins, and to morrow thou **committest** the very same thou **hast** confessed. Now thou art **purposed** to look well unto thy ways, and within a while thou so be-
havest thy self, as though thou hadst never any such purpose at all. Good cause have we therefore to humble our selves, and never to have any great conceit of our selves ; because we are so frail and so inconstant. Besides, that may quickly be lost by our own negligence, which by the grace of God and our own great pains we have scarce at length obtained.

7. What will become of us in the end, who begin to wax cold so timely ? Wo be unto us, if we will so give our selves unto ease, as if all were in peace and safety, when as yet **there** appeareth no sign of true holiness in our conversations ! We have need like young beginners to be newly instructed again to good life, if happily there be any hope of our future amendment and proficiency in spiritual things.

C H A P. XXIII.

Of the meditation of Death.

THere will very quickly be an end of thee here, therefore see what will become of thee hereafter. To day a Man, to morrow none; and out of sight, out of mind. O the stupidity and hardness of Mans Heart, who thinketh only upon the present, and hath no more care of what is to come! Thou shouldest so order thy self in all thy thoughts and actions, as if to day, yea this very moment, thou wert ready to depart. Hadst thou a clear conscience, thou wouldst not greatly fear death. It were better to avoid sin, than to fly death. If thou art not prepared to day, how wilt thou be prepared to morrow? To morrow is uncertain, and how knowest thou that thou shalt live till to morrow?

2. What availeth it to live long, when we are so little the better *by long living*? Alas! length of days doth oftner make our sins the greater, than our lives the better. O that we had spent but one day well in this world! Many there are who count
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how long it is since their conversion; and yet full slender oftentimes is the fruit of amendment of life. If to die be accounted dreadful, to live long may perhaps prove more dangerous. Happy is he that always hath the hour of his death before his eyes, and daily prepareth himself for to die. If at any time thou hast seen another Man die, make account thou must also pass the same way.

3. When it is morning, think thou mayest die before night, and when evening comes, dare not to promise thy self the next morning. Be thou therefore always in a readiness, and so lead thy life that death may never take thee unprepared. Many die suddenly and when they look not for it; for the Son of Man will come when we think not of his coming. When that last hour shall come, thou wilt begin to have a far different opinion of thy whole life that is past, and be exceeding sorry thou hast been so careless and remiss.

4. O how wise and happy is he that now laboreth to be such an one in his life, as he wisheth to be found at the hour of his death! A perfect contempt of the world, a fervent desire to go forward in vertue, the love of

discipline, the painfulness of repentance, the readines of obedience, the denying of our selves, and the bearing any affliction for the love of Christ patiently, will give us great confidence we shall die happily. Whilst thou art in health thou mayest do much good, but when thou art sick, I see not what thou art able to do. Few by sickness grow better and more reformed; as also they who wander much abroad, seldom thereby become holy.

5. Trust not to friends and kindred, neither do thou put off the care of thy iouls welfare till hereafter; for Men will sooner forget thee, than thou art aware of. It is better to look to it betime, and do some good beforehand, than to trust to other Mens courtesies. If thou beest not careful for thy self now, who will be careful for thee hereafter? The time that is now present is very precious, now are the days of salvation, now is the acceptable time. But alas! that thou shouldst spend thy time so idly here, where thou mightest purchase to live eternally hereafter. The time will come when thou shalt desire one day or hour to amend in, and I cannot say that it will be granted thee.

6. O beloved, from how great danger mightest thou deliver thy self! from how great fear free thy self, if thou wouldst be always mindful of death! Labor now to live so, that at the hour of death thou mayest rather rejoyce than fear; learn now to die to the world, that thou mayest then begin to live with Christ. Learn now to contemn all *earthly* things, that thou mayest freely go to Christ. Chastise thy body now by repentance, that thou mayest then have assured confidence.

7. Ah fool, why dost thou think to live long, when thou canst not promise to thy self one day? How many have been deceived and suddenly snatcht away? How often dost thou hear these reports, Such a Man is slain, another Man is drowned, a third breaks his neck with a fall from some high place, this Man died eating, and that Man playing? One perished by fire, another by the sword, another of the plague, another was slain by Thieves. Thus death is the end of all, and Mans life suddenly passeth away like a shaddow.

8. Who shall remember thee when thou art Dead? Do, do now my beloved, what-
soever

soever thou art able to do; for thou knowest not when thou shalt die, nor yet what shall befall thee after thy death. Now whilst thou hast time heap unto thy self everlasting riches, think on nothing but the salvation of thy soul, care for nothing but the things of God. Make now friends to thy self by honoring the Saints of God, and imitating their actions, that when thou failest in this short life, they may receive thee into everlasting habitations.

9. Keep thy self as a stranger and pilgrim upon the earth, and as one to whom the affairs of this world do nothing appertain. Keep thy heart free, and lifted up to God, because thou hast here no abiding city. Send thither thy daily prayers and sighs together with thy tears, that after death thy spirit may with much happiness pass to the Lord. *Amen.*

C H A P. XXIV.

Of Judgment, and the punishment of Sins.

IN all things have a special aim to thy end, and how thou wilt be able to stand before

before that severe Judg to whom nothing is hid, who is not pacified with gifts, nor admitteth any excuses, but will judg according to right and equity. O wretched and foolish sinner, who sometimes fearest the countenance of an angry Man; what answer wilt thou make to God who knoweth all thy wickedness! Why dost thou not provide for thy self against that great day of judgment, when no Man can excuse or answer for another, but every one shall have enough to answer for himself? Now are thy pains profitable, thy tears acceptable, thy groans audible, thy grief pacifieth God, and purgeth thy soul.

2. The patient Man hath a great and wholesome purgatory, who though he receive injuries, yet grieveth more for the malice of another, than for his own wrong; who prayeth willingly for his adversaries, and from his heart forgiveth their offences; he delayeth not to ask forgiveness of whomsoever he hath offended; he is sooner moved to compassion than to anger; he often offereth *an holy* violence to himself, and laboreth to bring the body wholly into subjection to the spirit. It is better to purge out our sins, and cut off our vices

vices here, than to keep them to be punished hereafter. Verily we do but deceive our selves through an inordinate love of the flesh.

3. What is it that that infernal fire feeds upon, but thy sins? The more thou sparest thy self now and followest the flesh, so much the more hereafter shall be thy punishment, and thou storest up greater fuel for that flame. In what thing a Man hath sinned, in the same shall he be the more grievously punished. There shall the slothful be pricked forward with burning goads, and the gluttons be tormented with great hunger and thirst. There shall the luxurious and lovers of pleasures be bathed in burning pitch and stinking brimstone, and the envious like mad Dogs shall howl for very grief.

4. There is no sin but shall have its proper torment. There the proud shall be filled with all confusion; the covetous shall be pinched with miserable penury; one hour of pain there shall be more bitter than a Thousand years of the sharpest pennance here! There 'is no quiet, no comfort for the damned there; yet here we have some intermission of our labors, and enjoy the
comfort

comfort of our friends. Be now solicitous and sorrowful because of thy sins, that at the day of judgment thou mayest be secure with the company of blessed souls. For then shall the righteous with great boldness stand against such as have vexed and oppressed them; then shall he stand to judge Men, who doth now humbly submit himself to the censures of Men. Then shall the poor and humble have great confidence, but the proud Man shall be compassed with fear on every side.

5. Then will it appear that he was wise in this world, who had learned for Christ to be a fool and despised. Then shall every affliction patiently undergone delight us, when the mouth of iniquity shall be stopped up. Then shall the devout rejoyce, and the profane shall mourn. Then shall he more rejoyce that hath beat down his own flesh, than he that hath abounded in all pleasure and delight. Then shall the poor attire shine gloriously, and the precious robes seem vile and contemptible. Then shall be more commended the poor cottage, than the gilded palace. Then will constant patience more avail us, than all earthly power. Then simple obedience shall

shall be preferred before all worldly wisdom.

6. Then shall a good and clear conscience more rejoyce a Man than the profound *learning of* Philosophy. Then shall the contempt of riches weigh more than all the worldings treasure. Then wilt thou be more comforted that thou hast prayed devoutly, than that thou hast fared daintily. Then wilt thou be more glad thou hast kept silence, than that thou hast talked much. Then will good works avail more than many goodly words. Then a strict life and severe repentance will be more pleasing than all earthly delights. Accustome thy self now to suffer a little, that thou mayest then be delivered from more grievous pains. Prove first here what thou canst endure hereafter. If now thou canst endure so little, how wilt thou then be able to endure perpetual torments? If now a little suffering make thee so impatient, what will hell fire do hereafter? Assure thy self thou canst not have two Paradises, it is impossible to enjoy delights in this world, and after that to reign with Christ.

7. Suppose thou hast hitherto lived always in honors and delights, what would
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all this avail thee if thou wert to die at this instant? All therefore is vanity, but to love God and serve him only. For he that loveth God with all his heart, is neither afraid of death nor punishment, nor of judgement, nor of hell; for perfect love gives secure access to God. But he that takes delight in sin, what marvel is it if he be afraid, both of death and judgment? Yet it is good, although love be not yet of force to withhold thee from sin, that at least the fear of hell should restrain thee. But he that layeth aside the fear of God, can never continue long in good estate, but falleth quickly into the snares of the Devil.

C H A P. XXV.

Of the zealous amendment of our whole life.

BE watchful and diligent in the service of God; and often bethink thy self wherefore thou camest hither, and why thou hast left the world. Was it not that thou mightest live to God, and become a spiritual Man? Be fervent then to come forward

forward, for shortly thou shalt receive a reward of thy Labors; there shall not be then any fear of sorrow in thy coasts. Labor but now a little, and thou shalt find great rest, yea perpetual joy *to thy soul*. If thou continuest faithful and fervent in doing *good*, no doubt but God will be faithful and liberal in rewarding thee. Thou oughtest to have a good hope for getting the victory; but thou must not be secure lest thou wax either negligent or proud.

2. When one that was in great anxiety of mind, often wavering between fear and hope, did once, being oppressed with grief, humbly prostrate himself in a Church in prayer, and said within himself, *O, if I knew that I should yet persevere!* he presently heard within him an answer from God, which said, *what if thou didst know it, what wouldst thou do? Do now what thou wouldst do then, and thou shalt be secure.* And being herewith comforted and strengthened, he committed himself wholly to the will of God, and that noysome anxiety ceased; neither had he any mind to search curiously any further, to know what should befall him; but rather labored to understand what was the perfect and acceptable will of

of God for the beginning and accomplishing of every good work.

3. Hope in the Lord, and do good, saith the Prophet, and inhabit the land, and thou shalt be fed in the riches thereof. One thing there is that draweth many back from a spiritual progress, and the diligent amendment of their lives; *viz.* The horror of the difficulty, or the labor of the combat. But they above others improve most in virtue, that endeavor most to overcome those things which are grievous and contrary unto them. For there a Man improveth more and obtaineth greater grace, where he more overcometh himself and mortifieth himself in spirit.

4. But all Men have not alike, to overcome and mortifie; yet he that is zealous and diligent, though he have more passions, shall profit more in virtue, than another that is of a more temperate disposition, if he be less fervent in the pursuit of virtue. Two things especially much further our amendment, to wit, to withdraw our selves violently from that to which nature is viciously inclined, and to labor earnestly for that virtue which we most want. Be careful also to avoid with great diligence
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those things in thy self, which do commonly displease thee in others.

5. Gather some profit to thy soul where-soever thou be ; so as if thou seest or hearest of any good examples, stir up thy self to the imitation thereof. But if thou seest any thing worthy of reproof, beware thou do not the same. And if at any time thou hast done it, labor quickly to amend it. As thine eye observeth others, so art thou also noted again by others. O how sweet and pleasant a thing it is, to see the Servants of Christ fervent and devout, endued with virtuous and decent manners ! And on the contrary, How pitiful and grievous a thing it is, to see them that live in a dissolute and disordered sort, not applying themselves to that for which they are called ! O how hurtful a thing it is, to neglect the good purposes of their vocation, and to busie themselves in that which is not committed to their care !

6. Be mindful of the profession thou hast made, and have always before the eyes of thy soul the remembrance of thy Saviour crucified. Thou hast good cause to be ashamed looking upon the life of Jesus Christ, seeing thou hast as yet no more endeavored
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to conform thy self unto him, though thou hast walked a long time in the way of God. A religious person that exerciseth himself seriously, and devoutly in the most holy life and passion of our Lord, shall there abundantly find whatsoever is necessary and profitable for him; neither shall he need to seek any better thing, out of Jesus. O, if Jesus crucified would come into our hearts, how quickly and fully should we be instructed *in all truth*?

7. A fervent religious person taketh and beareth all well that is commanded him; but he that is negligent and cold, hath tribulation upon tribulation, and on all sides is afflicted; for he is void of inward consolation, and is forbidden to seek eternal comforts. A religious person that liveth not according to discipline, lies open to great mischief to the ruine of his soul. He that seeketh liberty and ease, shall ever live in disquiet; for one thing or other will displease him.

8. O that we had nothing else to do, but always with our mouth, and whole heart to praise our Lord God! O that thou mightest never have need to eat, nor drink, nor sleep; but mightest always praise God,

and only employ thy self in spiritual exercises ; thou shouldest then be much more happy than now thou art, when for so many necessities thou art constrained to serve thy body. Would God these necessities were not at all, but only the spiritual refectiōns of the soul, which, alas, we taste of too seldom.

9. When a Man cometh to that estate, that he seeketh not his comfort from any creature, then doth he begin perfectly to relish God. Then shall he be contented with whatsoever doth befall him in this world. Then shall he neither rejoyce in great matters, nor be sorrowful for small ; but entirely and confidently commit himself to God, who shall be unto him all in all ; to whom, nothing doth perish, nor die, but all things do live unto him, and serve him at a beck without delay.

10. Remember always thy end, and how that time lost never returns. Without care and diligence thou shalt never get virtue. If thou beginnest to wax cold, it will be evil with thee ; but if thou give thy self to fervor of spirit, thou shalt find much peace, and feel less labor, through the assistance of Gods grace, and love of virtue.

virtue. The fervent and diligent Man is prepared for all things. It is harder to resist vices and passions, than to toil in bodily labors. He that avoideth not small faults, by little and little falleth into greater. Thou wilt always rejoyce in the evening, if thou spend the day profitably. Be watchful over thy self, stir up thy self, warn thy self, and whatsoever becomes of others neglect not thy self. The more *holy* violence thou usest against thy self, the more shall be thy *spiritual* profiting. *Amen.*



THE SECOND
B O O K.

C H A P. I.

Of the inward Life.

THE Kingdom of God is within you, saith the Lord. Turn thee with thy whole heart unto the Lord, and forsake this wretched World, and thy Soul shall find rest. Learn to despise exterior things, and to give thy self to the interior, and thou shalt perceive the Kingdom of God to come into thee. *For the Kingdom of God is peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost,* which is not given to the wicked. Christ will come into thee, and shew thee his consolations, if thou prepare for him a worthy mansion within thee. All his
glory

glory and beauty is within, and there he pleaseth himself. The inward man he often visits; and hath with him sweet discourses, pleasant solace, much peace, wonderful familiarity.

2. O faithful Soul, make ready thy heart for this Bridegroom, that he may vouchsafe to come unto thee, and dwell within thee. For he saith, *If any love me, he will keep my words, and we will come unto him, and will make our abode with him.* Give therefore admittance unto Christ, and deny entrance to all others. When thou hast Christ, thou art Rich, and he will suffice thee. He will be thy faithful and provident helper in all things, so as thou shalt not need to trust in men. For men are soon changed, and quickly fail, but Christ remaineth for ever, and standeth firmly unto the end.

3. There is little trust to be put in frail and mortal man, though he be profitable and dear unto thee: neither oughtest thou much to be grieved, if sometimes he cross and contradict thee. They that to day take thy part, to morrow may be against thee, and so on the contrary, they often turn like unto the wind. Put all thy trust

in God, let him be thy fear, and thy love: He will answer for thee, and do in all things what is best. Thou hast not here an abiding City; and wheresoever thou be, thou art a stranger and pilgrim: Neither shalt thou ever have rest, unless thou be most inwardly united unto Christ.

4. Why dost thou here gaze about, since this is not the place of thy rest? In Heaven ought to be thy dwelling, and all Earthly things are to be lookt upon as it were by the way. All things pass away, and thou together with them. Beware thou cleave not unto them, lest thou be entangled, and so dost perish. Let thy thought be on the Highest, and thy prayer directed unto Christ without ceasing. If thou canst not contemplate high and heavenly things, rest thy self in the passion of Christ, and dwell willingly in his Holy wounds. For if thou fly devoutly unto the wounds and precious marks of the Lord Jesus, thou shalt feel great comfort in tribulation: Neither wilt thou much care for being despised of men, and wilt easily bear words of detraction.

5. Christ was also in the World despised of men, and in greatest necessity; forsaken by his acquaintance and Friends in
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the midst of slanders. Christ would suffer and be despised; and darest thou complain of any? Christ had Adversaries and Backbiters; and wilt thou have all men thy Friends and Benefactors? For what shall thy patience be crowned, if no adversity happen unto thee? If thou wilt suffer no adversity, how wilt thou be the Friend of Christ? Suffer with Christ and for Christ, if thou desire to Reign with Christ.

6. If thou hadst but once perfectly entered into the secrets of Jesus, and tasted a little of his ardent affection; then wouldst thou not weigh thine own commodity or discommodity, but wouldst rather rejoyce at slanders, when they should chance to be cast upon thee: For the love of Jesus maketh a man to despise himself. A lover of Jesus and of the Truth, and a true inward Christian, and one free from inordinate affections, can freely turn himself unto God, and lift himself above himself in Spirit, and with the greatest enjoyment of his Soul rest in God.

7. He that judgeth of all things as they are, and not as they are said and esteemed to be, is truly wise, and taught rather by God than men. He that can live inwardly,
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and make small reckoning of outward things, neither requireth places, nor attendeth times, for performing of Religious exercises. A Spiritual man quickly recollecteth himself because he never poureth out himself wholly to outward things. He is not hindred by outward labor or business, which may be necessary for the time: But as things fall out, so he frameth himself unto them. He that hath well ordered and disposed all things within, careth not for the strange and perverse carriages of men. So much is a man hindred and distracted, by how much he draweth *external* matters unto himself.

8. If all went well with thee, and if thou wert all purged, all things would fall out to thy good and advantage. But many things displease and often trouble thee, because thou art not yet perfectly dead unto thy self, nor separated from all earthly things. Nothing so defileth and intangleth the heart of man, as the impure love to Creatures. If thou refuse outward comfort, thou wilt be able to contemplate the things of Heaven, and often receive internal joy.

C H A P. II.

Of humble submission.

Respect not much who is with thee, or who is against thee: But endeavor and take care that God may be with thee in every thing thou doest. Have a good Conscience, and God will defend thee. For whom God will help, no malice of man can hurt. If thou canst hold thy peace and suffer, without doubt thou shalt see that our Lord will help thee. He knoweth the time and manner how to deliver thee, and therefore thou oughtest to resign thy self unto him. It belongs to God to help, and to deliver from all shame. Oftentimes it is very profitable for the keeping us more humble, that others know and reprehend our faults.

2. When a man humbleth himself for his faults, then he easily pacifieth others, and quickly satisfieth those that are offended with him. God protecteth and delivereth the humble; he loveth and comforteth the humble, unto the humble man he enclineth himself; unto the humble he giveth

giveth great Grace ; and after his humiliation he raiseth him unto Glory. Unto the humble he revealeth his secrets, and sweetly draweth and inviteth him unto himself. The humble person though he suffer shame, is yet in peace ; for that he resteth in God, and not in the World. Do not think that thou hast profited any thing, unless thou esteem thy self inferior to all.

C H A P. III.

Of a good and peaceable Man.

First, keep thy self in peace, and then mayst thou pacifie others. A peaceable man doth more good than he that is well Learned. A passionate man turneth even good into evil, and easily believeth the worst. A good peaceable man turneth all things into good. He that is well in peace, is not suspicious of any. But he that is discontented and troubled, is tossed with divers suspicions : He is neither quiet himself, nor suffereth others to be quiet. He often speaketh that which he ought not to speak ; and omitteth that which were more

more expedient for him to do. He considereth what others are bound to do, and neglecteth that which he is bound to himself. First therefore have a careful zeal over thy self, and then thou mayst justly shew thy self zealous also of thy neighbors good.

2. Thou knowest well how to excuse and colour thine own deeds, and thou wilt not receive the excuses of others. It were more meet that thou didst accuse thy self, and excusest thy Brother. If thou wilt be born withal, bear also with another. Behold how far off thou art yet from true charity and humility, which knoweth not how to be angry with any, or to be moved with indignation, but only against himself. It is no great matter to converse with the good, and those that are of a gentle disposition; for that is naturally pleasing to all, and every one willingly enjoyeth peace, and loveth those best that agree with him. But to be able to live peaceably with unquiet, and perverse men, or with the disorderly, or such as contradict us, is a great grace, and a very commendable and manly deed.

3. Some there are that keep themselves
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in peace, and are in peace also with others. And there are some that neither are in peace themselves, nor suffer others to be in peace. Some there are who are troublesome to others, but always more troublesome to themselves. And others there are that keep themselves in peace, and labor to bring others unto peace. Our whole peace in this miserable life consisteth rather in humble suffering, than in not feeling adversities. He that can best tell how to suffer, will best keep himself in peace. He is a conqueror of himself, a Lord of the world a friend of Christ, and heir of Heaven.

C H A P. IV.

Of a pure mind, and upright intention.

WITH Two wings, Man is lifted up from earthly vanities, that is, with *simplicity* and *purity*. Simplicity ought to be in our intention: Purity in our affection. Simplicity doth intend God; Purity doth apprehend and take him. No good action will hinder thee, if thou be inwardly free from all inordinate affection. If thou

thou intend and seek nothing else but the will of God and the good of thy neighbor, thou shalt enjoy internal liberty. If thy heart were sincere and upright, then every creature would be unto thee a looking glaſs of life, and a book of holy doctrine. There is no creature ſo little and abject that repreſenteth not the goodneſs of God.

2. If thou wert inwardly good and pure, then thou wouldeſt be well able to ſee and underſtand all things without any impediment. A pure heart penetrateth Heaven and Hell. Such as every one is inwardly, ſo he judgeth outwardly. If there be joy in the world, ſurely a Man of a pure heart poſſeſſeth it. And if there be any where tribulation and affliction, an evil conſcience beſt feels it. As Iron put into the fire loſeth its ruſt, and becometh all bright like fire, ſo he that wholly turneth himſelf unto God, is purged from all *fulneſſ* and ſlothfulneſs, and is changed into a new Man.

3. When one beginneth to wax cold, then he is afraid of a ſmall labor, and willingly receiveth external comfort. But when he once beginneth to overcome himſelf perfectly, and to walk manfully in the
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way of God; then he esteemeth those things to be light, which before seemed grievous unto him.

CHAP. V

Of the consideration of ones self.

WE cannot trust much to our selves, for that grace oftentimes and understanding is wanting. There is but little light in us, and that which we have we quickly lose by our negligence, and oftentimes we do not perceive our own inward blindness. We often do evil, and excuse it worse. We are sometimes moved with passion, and we think it to be Zeal. We reprehend small things in others, and pass over greater matters in our selves. We quickly feel and weigh what we suffer at the hands of others; but we mind not what others suffer from us. He that doth well and rightly considers his own works, will find little cause to judg hardly of another.

2. The inward Christian preferreth the care of himself before all other cares. And he

he that diligently attendeth unto himself, doth seldom speak much of others. Thou wilt never be so inwardly religious, unless thou pass over other Mens matters with silence, and look especially to thy self. If thou attend wholly unto God and thy self, thou wilt be little moved with whatsoever thou seest abroad. Where art thou, when thou art not with thy self? And when thou hast run over all, what hast thou then profited, if thou hast neglected thy self? If thou desirest peace of mind and true union, thou must put all things behind thee, and look only upon thy self.

3. Thou shalt therefore profit much, if thou keep thy self free from all temporal cares. Thou shalt greatly decrease, if thou esteem any thing of this world. Let nothing be greater unto thee, nothing acceptable, but only God himself, or that which is of God. Esteem all comfort vain which thou receivest from any creature. A soul that loveth God, despiseth all things that be inferior unto God. God alone is everlasting, and of infinite greatness, filling all creatures; the souls solace, and the true joy of the heart.

C H A P. VI.

Of the joy of a good conscience.

THe glory of a good Man, is the testimony of a good conscience. Have a good conscience, and thou shalt ever have joy. A good conscience is able to bear very much, and is very chearful in adversities. An evil conscience is always fearful and unquiet. Thou shalt rest sweetly, if thy heart do not reprehend thee. Do thou never rejoyce, but when thou hast done well. Sinners have never true mirth, nor feel inward peace; because *there is no peace to the wicked*, saith the Lord. And if they should say, We are in peace, no evil shall fall upon us, and who shall dare to hurt us? Believe them not; for upon a sudden will arise the wrath of God, and their deeds shall be brought to nought, and their thoughts shall perish.

2. To glory in tribulation is no hard thing for him that loveth; for to glory so, is to glory in the Cross of our Lord. That glory is short, which is given and received from Men. Sorrow always accompanieth the
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the glory of the world. The glory of the good is in their consciences, and not in the tongues of Men. The gladness of the just is of God, and in God ; and their joy is of the truth. He that desireth true and everlasting glory, careth not for that which passeth away with time. And he that seeketh temporal glory, or contemneth it not from his heart, sheweth himself but little to esteem of the glory of Heaven. He enjoyeth great tranquillity and peace of mind, that careth neither for the praises, nor dispraises of Men.

3. He will easily be content and pacified, whose conscience is pure. He is not the more holy, though thou commend him ; nor the more abject, though thou dispraise him. What thou art, that thou art ; neither canst thou be said to be greater, than what thou art in the sight of God. If thou consider what thou art within thee, thou wilt not care what Men say of thee. Man seeth in the face, but God looketh into the heart. Man considereth the deeds, but God weigheth the intention. To do always well, and to esteem little of himself, is a sign of an humble soul. To refuse to be comforted by any creature, is a sign of great purity, and inward confidence.

4, He that seeketh to witness for himself from without, doth shew that he hath wholly committed himself unto God. *For not he that commendeth himself, the same is approved* (saith blessed Paul) *but whom God commendeth.* To walk inwardly with God, and not to be possessed with any outward affection, is the state of a spiritual Man.

C H A P. VII.

Of the love of Jesus above all things.

Blessed is he that understandeth what it is to love Jesus, and to despise himself for Jesus. Thou oughtest to leave thy beloved, for thy beloved; for that Jesus will be beloved alone above all things. The love of things created is deceitful and unconstant; the love of Jesus is faithful and constant. He that cleaveth unto creatures, shall fall with that which is subject to fall; He that embraceth Jesus, shall stand firmly for ever. Love him, and keep him for thy friend, who when all go away, will not forsake thee, nor suffer thee to perish
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in the end. Thou must once be left of all, whether thou wilt or no.

2. Keep close to Jesus both in life and death, and commit thy self unto his trust, who, when all fail, can alone help thee. Thy beloved is of that nature, that he will not admit of a corrival; but will have thy heart alone, and sit like a King in his own throne. If thou couldest purge thy self perfectly of all creatures, Jesus would willingly dwell with thee. Whatsoever thou reposest in Men, out of Jesus, is all no better than lost. Trust not nor rely upon a reed full of wind; for that all flesh is grass, and all the glory thereof shall wither away as the flower of the field.

3. Thou shalt quickly be deceived, if thou look only to the outward shew of Men. And if in them thou seekest thy comfort and profit, thou shalt often feel loss. If thou seekest Jesus in all things, thou shalt surely find Jesus. But if thou seekest thy self, thou shalt also find thy self, but to thine own harm. For Man doth more hurt himself if he seek not Jesus, than the whole world and all his adversaries could annoy him,

C H A P. VIII.

Of familiar conversation with Jesus.

WHen Jesus is present, all is well, and nothing seemeth difficult; but when Jesus is absent, every thing is hard. When Jesus speaketh not inwardly unto us, our comfort is nothing worth; but if Jesus speak but one word, we feel much consolation. Did not Mary presently rise from the place where she wept, when Martha said unto her, *The Master is come, and calleth for thee?* Happy is the hour when Jesus calleth from tears to spiritual Joy. How dry and hard art thou without Jesus! How foolish and vain, if thou desire any thing out of Jesus! Is not this a greater loss, than if thou shouldest lose the whole world?

2. What can the world profit thee without Jesus? To be without Jesus is a grievous Hell; and to be with Jesus is a sweet Paradise. If Jesus be with thee, no enemy can hurt thee. He that findeth Jesus, findeth a good treasure, yea a good above all goods: And he that loseth Jesus, loseth too much,

much, and more than the whole world. He is most poor that liveth without Jesus; and he is most rich that is well with Jesus.

3. It is a piece of great skill to know how to converse with Jesus, and great wisdom to know how to keep Jesus. Be humble and peaceable, and Jesus will be with thee. Be devout and quiet, and Jesus will stay with thee. Thou mayest soon drive away Jesus and lose his grace, if thou turn aside to outward things. And if thou shouldest drive him from thee, and lose him, unto whom wilt thou flie, and what friends wilt thou then seek? Without a friend thou canst not well live; and if Jesus be not above all a friend unto thee, thou shalt be too sorrowful and desolate. Thou doest therefore foolishly, if thou doest trust or rejoyce in any other. It is better for thee to have all the world against thee, than Jesus offended with thee. Amongst all things therefore that be dear unto thee, let Jesus alone be thy chiefest beloved.

4. Love all for Jesus, but Jesus for himself. Jesus Christ alone is singularly to be beloved; who alone is found to be good and faithful above all friends. For him,

and in him, let as well friends as foes be dear unto thee, and all these are to be prayed for, that all may know and love him. Never desire to be singularly commended or beloved, for that appertaineth only unto God, who hath none like unto himself. Neither do thou desire that the heart of any should be set on thee, nor do thou set thy heart on the love of any; but let Jesus be in thee, and in every good Man

5. Be pure and free within, and intangle not thy heart with any creature. Thou oughtest to be as it were naked, and to carry a pure heart to God, if thou wouldest be free to consider and see how sweet the Lord is. And truly, unless thou be prevented and drawn by his grace, thou shalt never attain to that happiness to forsake and cast off all, that thou alone mayest be united to him alone. For when the grace of God cometh unto a Man, then he is made able for all things. And when it goeth away, he is poor and weak, and as it were left only unto the lash and scourge of every adversary. In this thou oughtest not to be dejected, nor despair; but to resign thy self with all indifferency unto the will of God, and to bear all things that befall thee for the glory

glory of Christ ; for after winter followeth summer, after night cometh day, and after a tempest, fair weather.

C H A P. IX.

Of the want of all comfort.

IT is no hard matter to despise humane comfort, when we have divine. It is much and very much, to be able to want both humane and divine comfort ; and for the Glory of God, to be willing to endure desolation of heart ; and to seek himself in nothing, nor to regard his own merit. What great matter is it, if thou be chearful and devout at the coming of grace ? This hour is wished for of all Men. He rideth easily enough whom the grace of God carrieth. And what marvel if he feel not his burden, who is born up by the Almighty, and led by the sovereign guide ?

2. We are always willing to have something for our comfort ; and a Man doth hardly put off *and forsake* himself. The holy martyr St. Laurence overcame the world with his Prelates because he despised whatsoever

soever seemed delightsom in the world, and for the love of Christ patiently suffered Sixtus to be taken from him, whom he most dearly loved. He overcame therefore the love of Man by the love of the Creator; and he rather chose the divine good pleasure, than humane comfort. See thou also learn to forsake some necessary thing, and a beloved friend, for the love of God. Be not grieved when thou art forsaken by a friend, knowing that we all at length must be separated one from another.

3. A Man must fight long, and mightily with himself, before he get the full victory over himself, and be able to draw his whole heart in to God. When a Man trusteth in himself, he easily slideth unto humane comforts, but a true lover of Christ, and a diligent follower of virtue, betakes not himself to *humane* comforts, nor seeketh such sensible sweetneses, but rather hard exercises, and to sustain great labors for Christ.

4. When therefore spiritual comfort is given thee from God, receive it thankfully; but know that it is the gift of God, not any desert of thine. Be not puffed up, joy not too much, neither do thou presume vainly ;

vainly ; but be rather the more humble for that gift, and more wary and sollicitous in all thine actions ; for that hour will pass away, and temptation will succeed. When consolation is taken from thee, despair not presently ; but with humility and patience wait for the Heavenly visitation ; for God is able again to give thee greater consolation. This is not new nor strange unto them that have experience in the way of God ; for the great Saints and ancient prophets had oftentimes experience of such kind of vicissitudes.

5. For which cause one under the enjoyment of divine favor, said, *I said in my prosperity, I shall never be moved.* But in the want of this, he addeth what he found in himself ; saying, *thou turn'dst thy face from me, and I became troubled.* Yet doth he not despair in the midst of these changes, but more earnestly prayeth unto the Lord, and saith, *Unto thee, O Lord, will I cry, and I will pray unto my God.* Lastly, he receiveth the fruit of his prayer, and witnesseth that he was heard, saying, *The Lord hath heard me, and taken pity on me ; the Lord is become my helper.* But wherein ? *Thou hast turned,* saith he, *my sorrow into joy, and thou hast*
compassed

compassed me about with gladness. If great Saints have been so dealt withal, we that are weak and poor ought not to despair, if we be sometimes fervent and sometimes cold; for the Spirit cometh and goeth, according to the good pleasure of his will. For which cause blessed Job saith, *Thou visitest him early in the morning, and suddenly thou provest him.*

6. Whereupon therefore can I hope, or wherein ought I to trust, but in the great mercy of God alone, and in the only hope of heavenly grace? For whether I enjoy the presence of good Men, or religious brethren, or faithful friends, or holy Books, or excellent treatises, or sweet songs and hymns, all these help little, and have little favor, when grace forsaketh me, and I remain left in mine own poverty. At such time there is no better remedy than patience, and the ordering of my self according to the will of God.

7. I never found any so religious and devout, that hath not had sometimes a withdrawing of grace, or felt not some decrease of zeal. There was never Saint so highly rapt, and illuminated who first or last was not tempted. For he is not worthy of the
high

high contemplation of God, who hath not been exercised with some tribulation for Gods sake. For temptation going before, is wont to be a sign of ensuing comfort. And unto those that are proved by temptations, heavenly comfort is promised. *He that shall overcome, saith he, I will give him to eat of the Tree of life.*

8. But divine comfort is given, that a Man may be stronger to bear adversities. There followeth also temptation, lest he should wax proud of any good. The Devil sleepeth not, neither is the flesh as yet dead; therefore cease not to prepare thy self to the battel; For on thy right hand and on thy left are enemies that never rest.

C H A P. X.

Of thankfulness for the grace of God.

WHy seekest thou rest, since thou art born to labor? Dispose thy self to patience rather than to comfort, and to the bearing of the Cross, rather than to gladness. What secular person is there that would

would not willingly receive spiritual joy and comfort, if he could always have it? For spiritual comforts exceed all the delights of the world, and pleasures of the flesh. All worldly delights are either vain or unclean; but spiritual delights are only pleasant and honest, sprung from virtue, and infused by God into pure minds. But no Man can always enjoy these divine comforts according to his desire; for the time of temptation is not long away.

2. False freedom of mind, and great trust of our selves is very contrary to heavenly visitations. God doth well in giving the grace of comfort; but Man doth evil in not returning all again unto God with thanksgiving. And therefore the gifts of grace cannot flow in us, because we are not thankful to the giver, and return them not wholly to the head-fountain. For grace ever attendeth him that is thankful; and from the proud shall be taken that which is wont to be given to the humble.

3. I desire not that consolation that taketh from me compunction; nor do I affect that contemplation which leadeth to haughtiness of mind. For all that is high, is not holy; nor all that is sweet, good; nor

nor every desire, pure ; nor every thing that is dear unto us, is grateful to God. I do willingly accept of that Grace, whereby I may ever become more humble and affected with an holy fear, and be made more ready to forsake my self. He that is taught by the gift of grace, and school'd by the scourge of the withdrawing thereof, will not dare to attribute any good to himself, but will rather acknowledg himself poor and naked. Give unto God that which is Gods, and ascribe unto thy self that which is thine own ; that is, give thanks to God for his grace ; and acknowledg that nothing is to be attributed to thee, but only sin and the punishment due thereunto.

4. Set thy self always in the lowest place and the highest shall be given thee ; for the highest consist not without the lowest. The chiefest Saints before God, are the least in their own judgments ; and how much the more glorious, so much the humbler within themselves. Those that are full of truth and Heavenly glory, are not desirous of vain glory. Those that are firmly settled and grounded in God, can no way be proud. And they that ascribe all
unto

unto God, what good soever they have received, seek not glory one of another, but would have that glory which is from God alone; and desire above all things to praise God in himself, and in all the Saints, and always tend unto the same.

5. Be therefore thankful for the least gift, so shalt thou be meet to receive greater. Let the least be unto thee also as the greatest, and the most contemptible as an especial gift. If thou consider the worth of the giver, no gift will seem little, or of too mean esteem. For it is not little that is given by the most high God. Yea, if he should give punishment and stripes, it ought to be grateful; for that he doth it always for our welfare, whatsoever he permiteth to happen unto us. He that desireth to keep the grace of God, let him be thankful for the grace given, and patient for the taking away thereof. Let him pray that it may return. Let him be wary and humble; lest he lose it.

C H A P. XI.

How few the lovers of the Cross of Christ are.

JESUS hath now many lovers of his Heavenly Kingdom, but few bearers of his Cross. He hath many desirous of comfort, but few of tribulation. He findeth many companions of his table, but few of his abstinence. All desire to rejoyce with him, few will suffer any thing for him, *or with him*. Many follow Jesus unto the breaking of Bread; but few to the drinking of the Cup of his passion. Many reverence his miracles, few follow the ignominy of his Cross. Many love Jesus as long as adversities happen not. Many praise and bless him, as long as they receive any comforts from him. But if Jesus hide himself, and leave them but a while; they fall either into complaint, or into too much dejection of mind.

2. But they that love Jesus for Jesus, and not for some comfort of their own, bless him in all tribulation and anguish of heart, as well as in the greatest comfort. And although he should never give them com-

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fore

fort, they notwithstanding, would ever praise him, and always give him thanks.

3. O how powerful is the pure love of Jesus, which is mixed with no self-love, nor proper interest ! Are not all those to be called hirelings, that ever seek comforts ? Do they not shew themselves to be rather lovers of themselves than of Christ, that always think of their own commodity and gain ? Where may one be found that will serve God freely ?

4. It is hard to find any one so spiritual that is stript of *the love of all earthly* things. For where is any one to be found that is indeed poor in spirit, and free from all *affecti-on* of creatures ? He's a Jewel of such price as is scarce to be met with in these parts. If a Man should give all his wealth, yet is it nothing. And if he should outwardly express great repentance, yet it is little. And if he should attain to all knowledg, he is yet afar off. And if he should be of great virtue, and very fervent devotion, yet there is much wanting ; to wit, one thing, which is most necessary for him. What is that ? that leaving all, he forsake himself, and go wholly from himself, and retain nothing of self-love ; And when he hath

hath done all that he knoweth to be done, let him think that he hath done nothing.

5. Let him not weigh that much which might be much esteemed; but according to truth let him affirm himself to be an unprofitable servant, as our Saviour hath said, *when you shall have done all things that are commanded you, say, we are unprofitable servants.* Then may he be truly poor and naked in spirit, and say with the Prophet, I am alone and poor; yet no man richer, no Man more powerful, no Man more free than he that can leave himself and all things, and set himself in the lowest place.

CHAP. XII.

Of the high way of the holy Cross.

U Nto many this speech seemeth hard, *Deny thy self, take up thy Cross, and follow Jesus.* But it will be much harder to hear that last word. *Depart from me ye cursed into everlasting fire.* For they that now willingly hear and follow the word of the Cross, shall not then fear to hear the sen-

tence of everlasting damnation. This sign of the Cross shall be in Heaven; when our Lord shall come to judgment. Then all the servants of the Cross, who in their lifetime conformed themselves unto Christ crucified, shall draw near unto Christ the Judge with great confidence.

2. Why therefore fearest thou to take up the Cross which leadeth thee to a Kingdom? In the Cross is salvation, in the Cross is life, in the Cross is protection against our enemies, in the Cross is infusion of Heavenly sweetness, in the Cross is strength of mind, in the Cross is joy of spirit, in the Cross is the height of virtue, in the Cross is the perfection of sanctity. There is no salvation of the soul, nor hope of everlasting life but in the Cross. Take up therefore thy Cross and follow Jesus, and thou shalt go into life everlasting. He is gone before, bearing his Cross, and is dead for thee on the Cross; that thou mayest also bear thy Cross and desire to die on the Cross *with him*. For if thou diest with him, thou shalt also live with him. And if thou be his companion in pain, thou shalt be partaker with him also in glory.

3. Behold in the Cross all doth consist
and

and all lyeth in our dying *upon it*; for there is no other way unto life, and unto true inward peace, but the way of the Holy Cross, and of daily mortification. Go where thou wilt, seek whatsoever thou wilt, thou shalt not find a higher way above, nor a safer way below, than the way of the Holy Cross. Dispose and order all things according to thy will and judgment; yet thou shalt ever find, that of necessity thou must suffer somewhat either willingly or against thy will, and so thou shalt ever find the Cross. For either thou shalt feel pain in thy body, or in thy soul thou shalt suffer tribulation of spirit.

4. Sometimes thou shalt be forsaken of God. sometimes thou shalt be troubled by thy neighbors; and which is more, oftentimes thou shalt be irksome to thy self; neither canst thou be delivered or eased by any remedy or comfort; but so long as pleaseth God, thou oughtest to bear it. For God will have thee learn to suffer tribulation without comfort; and that thou subject thy self wholly to him, and become more humble by tribulation. No Man hath so cordial a feeling of the passion of Christ, as he who hath suffered the like himself.

The Cross therefore is always ready, and every where waits for thee. Thou canst not escape it whithersoever thou runnest; for wheresoever thou goest, thou carriest thy self with thee, and shalt ever find thy self; both above and below, without and within, which way soever thou dost turn thee, every where thou shalt find the Cross; and every where of necessity thou must have patience, if thou wilt have inward peace, and enjoy an everlasting Crown.

5. If thou bear the Cross willingly, it will bear thee, and lead thee to thy desired end, to wit, where there shall be an end of suffering, though here there shall not. If thou bear it unwillingly, thou makest for thy self a new burden, and encreasest thy load, and yet notwithstanding thou must bear it. If thou cast away one Cross, without doubt thou shalt find another, and that perhaps a more heavy one.

6. Thinkest thou to escape that which no Man could ever avoid? Which of the Saints in the world was without crosses, and tribulation? Verily Jesus Christ, our Lord was never one hour without pain of suffering, so long as he lived, *Christ* (saith he) *ought to suffer, and arise again from the dead,*

dead, and so to enter into his glory, Luke 24.
and how dost thou seek any other way than
this high way which is the way of the Holy
Cross?

7. The whole life of Christ was a Cross
and Martyrdom; and dost thou seek rest
and joy? Thou art deceived, thou art de-
ceived if thou seekest any other thing than
to suffer tribulations; for this whole mor-
tal life is full of miseries, and environed on
every side with Crosses. And how much
the more one hath profited in spirit, so
much the heavier crosses he oftentimes
findeth, for the love he beareth to God in-
creaseth the grief which he endureth for
his banishment.

8. But yet this Man, though so many
ways afflicted, is not without some refresh-
ing comfort, for that he perceiveth much
benefit to accrew unto him by the bearing
of his Cross. For whilest he willingly put-
teth himself under it, all the burden of tri-
bulation is turned into the confidence of di-
vine comfort. And how much the more
the flesh is wasted by affliction, so much
the more is the spirit strengthened by in-
ward grace. And sometimes he is so com-
forted with the desire of tribulation and ad-

versity, for the love of conforming himself to the Cross of Christ, that he would not wish at any time to be without sorrow and tribulation ; because he believeth that so much the more acceptable he shall be unto God, how much the more, and more grievous things he can suffer for him. This is not the power of Man, but it is the grace of Christ, that can, and doth so much in frail flesh ; that what naturally it always abhorreth and flyeth, that by fervor of spirit, it encounters with delight.

9. It is not according to **Mans** inclination to bear the Cross, to chastise and subdue the body, to fly honors, to suffer contumelies with a willing heart, to despise himself and to wish to be despised, to bear all adversities and dammages, and to desire no prosperity in this world. If thou considerest thy self, thou shalt be able to perform no such matter of thy self. But if thou trustest in the Lord, strength shall be given thee from Heaven, and the world and flesh shall be made subject to thy command. Neither shalt thou fear thy enemy the Devil, if thou be armed with faith, and bearest the Cross of Christ.

10. Set therefore thy self, like a good
and

and faithful servant of Christ to bear manfully the Cross of thy Lord, who was crucified for thee out of love. Prepare thyself to bear many adversities and divers kinds of troubles in this miserable life; for so it will be with thee, wheresoever thou be, and so surely thou wilt find it, wheresoever thou hide thy self. So it must be, and there is no remedy or means to avoid tribulation and sorrow, but to bear them. Drink of the Cup of our Lord heartily, if thou wilt be his friend; and desirest to have part with him. As for comforts, leave them to God; let him do therein as shall best please him. Set thou thy self to suffer tribulations, and account them the greatest comforts; for that the sufferings of this life are not worthy of the glory which is to come, although thou alone couldest suffer them all.

11. When thou shalt come to this estate, that tribulation shall seem sweet and savory unto thee for Christ; then thou mayst think it is well with thee, for thou hast found a Paradise upon earth. As long as it is grievous to thee to suffer, and that thou desirest to fly it; so long shalt thou be ill at ease; and the tribulation thou flyest will follow thee every where.

12. If

12. If thou dost set thy self to that thou oughtest, to wit, to suffer, and to die to thy self, it will quickly be better with thee, and thou shalt find peace. Although thou shouldest have been rapt even unto the third Heaven with *Paul*, thou art not for this secured that thou shalt suffer no adversity. I (saith Jesus) *will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name.* It remaineth therefore, that thou suffer, if thou wilt love Jesus, and perpetually serve him.

13. O that thou wert worthy to suffer something for the name of Jesus ! how great glory would it be unto thee, what joy to all the Saints of God, how great edification also to thy neighbor ! For all do commend patience; though few desire to suffer. With great reason thou oughtest to be willing to suffer a little for Christ ; since many suffer far greater things for the world.

14. Know for certain that thou oughtest to lead a dying life. And how much the more every one dyeth to himself, so much the more doth he begin to live to God. No Man is fit to attain unto Heavenly things, unless he submit himself to
the

the bearing of adversities for Christ. Nothing is more grateful unto God, nothing more wholesome to thee in this world, than to suffer willingly for Christ. And if it were in thy choice, thou shouldest rather wish to suffer Adversities for Christ, than to enjoy the delight of many comforts; because hereby thou shouldest be more like unto Christ, and more conformable to all the Saints. For our worthiness, and the proficiency of our spiritual estate consisteth not in many sweetnesse and comforts, but rather in suffering great afflictions and tribulation.

15. If there had been any better thing, and more profitable to the health of Man than suffering, surely Christ would have shewed it by word and example. But he plainly exhorteth all the Disciples that followed him, and all that desire to follow him, to the bearing of the Cross, and saith, *If any will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his Cross, and follow me.* So that when we have read and searched all, let this be the last conclusion, *That by many tribulations we must enter into the Kingdom of God.*



THE THIRD
B O O K.

C H A P. I.

Of the inward Speech of Christ unto a Faithful Soul.

I will bear what the Lord God will speak in me. Blessed is the soul that heareth the Lord speaking in her, and receiveth from his mouth the word of comfort. Blessed are those ears that receive the sound of the divine voice, and listen not to the whisperings of the world. Blessed indeed are those ears that hearken not to the voice which soundeth outwardly, but unto the truth which teacheth inwardly. Blessed are the eyes that are shut to outward things, but open to those things that are internal.
Blessed

Blessed are they that enter into the inward things, and endeavor to prepare themselves more and more by daily exercises to the attaining of Heavenly secrets. Blessed be they that delight to converse with God, and rid themselves of all worldly impediments.

2. Consider these things, my soul, and shut up the door of thy sensual desires, that thou mayest hear what thy Lord God speaketh in thee. Thus saith thy beloved, I am thy safety, thy peace, and thy life; Keep thy self with me, and thou shalt find peace. Leave all transitory things, and seek those that be everlasting. What are all temporal things, but deceiving snares? And what do all creatures avail thee, if thou be forsaken by the Creator? Forsake therefore all earthly things and labor to please thy Creator, and be Faithful unto him, that thou mayest attain unto the true happiness.

C H A P. II.

*That truth speaketh inwardly without noise
of words.*

C*Hristian.* Speak Lord, for thy servant heareth: I am thy servant, grant me understanding, that I may know thy testimonies. Incline my heart to the words of thy mouth. Let thy speech distil as the dew *upon my soul.* The Children of *Israel* in times past said unto *Moses*, *Speak thou unto us, and we will hear thee: Let not the Lord speak unto us, lest we die.* Not so Lord, not so, I beseech thee. But rather with the Prophet Samuel, I humbly and earnestly intreat, *Speak Lord, for thy servant heareth.* Let not *Moses* speak unto me, nor any of the prophets, but do thou rather speak, my Lord God, the inspirer and enlightner of all the Prophets; for thou alone without them canst perfectly instruct me, but they without thee can profit nothing.

2. They indeed may sound forth words, but they cannot give spirit and life; they speak marvellous well, but if thou be silent, they

they inflame not the heart. They may teach the letter, but thou openest the sense. They bring forth mysteries, but thou unlockest the meaning of sealed things. They declare thy commandments, but thou helpst to fulfil them. They shew the way, but thou givest strength to walk in it. They work only exteriorly, but thou instructest and enlightnest the heart. They water outwardly, but thou givest fruitfulness. They make a noise with words, but thou givest understanding to the hearing.

3. Let not therefore *Moses* speak unto me, but thou my Lord God, the everlasting Truth; lest I die; and prove unfruitful, if I be warned outwardly only, and not inflamed within; lest the word heard and not fulfilled, known and not loved, believed and not observed, turn to my condemnation. Speak therefore Lord, for thy servant heareth, for thou hast the words of everlasting life. Speak unto me to the comfort of my soul, and to the amendment of my whole life, and to thy praise and glory, and everlasting honor.

C H A P. III.

*That the words of God are to be heard
with humility, and that many
weigh them not.*

Chrift. Son, hear my words, words of greatest sweetness, excelling all the knowledg of the Philosophers and wise Men of this world. My words are *spirit and life*, not to be weighed by the understanding of Man. They are not to be drawn to vain liking, but to be heard with silence, and to be received with all humility and great affection.

Christian. And I said, Blessed is the Man whom thou shalt instruct, O Lord, and shalt teach thy law, that thou mayest give him rest from the evil days, and that he be not destroyed upon earth.

2. *Christ.* I (*saith our Lord*) have taught the Prophets from the beginning, and cease not in these days to speak to every one; but many are hardned and deaf to my speech. The greater number do more willingly listen to the world, than to God; and follow sooner the desires of their flesh, than

than the will of God. The world promisseth temporal and small things, and is served with great eagerness: I promise most high and eternal things, and the hearts of Men are nothing moved therewith. Who is he that serveth and obeyeth me with equal care to that with which the world and the Lords thereof are served? *Blush O Sidon, saith the Sea.* And if thou ask the cause, hear wherefore: For a little Prebend a long journey is undertaken; for everlasting life many will scarce once lift a foot from the ground. A thing of small value is sought after greedily; for a penny sometimes there is foul contention; for a vain thing and sleight promise, Men cease not to toil day and night.

3. But *alas* for an unchangeable good, for an inestimable reward, for the highest honor and glory without end, they are loth to take the least pains. Blush therefore slothful and complaining Servant, that they are found to be more ready to destruction, than thou to life. They rejoyce more in vanity than thou in the truth. And yet they are sometimes frustrated of their hope; but my promise deceiveth none, nor sendeth him away empty that trusteth

in me. I will give that which I have promised, I will fulfil that which I have said; but to him that remains faithful in my love to the end. I am the rewarder of all that are good, and do try my devout servants with strong trials.

4. Write my words in thy heart and think diligently of them; for they will be very necessary in time of temptation. What thou understandest not when thou readest, thou shalt know in the day of visitation. I am wont to visit my elect two several ways, to wit, with temptation, and comfort. And I daily read two lessons unto them, one reprehending their vices, another exhorting them to the increase of virtues. He that hath my words and despiseth them, hath within himself that shall judg him at the last day.

A Prayer to implore the grace of devotion.

5. O Lord my God, thou art to me whatsoever is good. Who am I, that dare speak unto thee? I am thy poorest servant and a most vile worm, much more poor and contemptible than I can or dare express. Remember yet O Lord, that I am nothing,
and

and can do nothing. Thou alone art good, just, and holy; thou canst do all things, thou doest all things, thou fillest all things, only the sinner thou sendest empty away. Remember thy mercies, and fill my heart with thy grace, who will not that thy works be void and in vain.

6. How can I bear up my self in this miserable life, unless thou strengthen me with thy mercy and grace? Turn not thy face from me; delay not thy visitation; draw not away thy comfort, lest my soul become as the thirsty land unto thee. Lord, teach me to fulfil thy will, teach me to live worthily, and humbly in thy sight, for thou art my wisdom, thou dost truly know me, and didst know me before the world was made, and before I was born in the world.

C H A P. IV.

That we ought to live in truth and humility before God.

C*Hrist.* Son, walk before me in sincerity and truth, and ever seek me in simplicity of heart. He that walketh before me in truth, shall be defended from evil incursions, and the Truth shall deliver him from seducers, and from the detractions of the wicked. If the Truth shall have made thee free, thou shalt be truly free, and shalt not care for the vain speeches of Men.

Christian. Lord, it is true. According as thou saidst, so I beseech thee let it be with me, let thy Truth teach me, and keep me, and bring me safe to an happy end. Let it deliver me from all evil affection and inordinate love; and I shall walk with thee in great freedom of heart.

2. *Christ.* I will teach thee (saith the Truth) those things that are right and pleasing in my sight. Think of thy sins with great displeasure and grief, and never

ver esteem thy self any thing for thy good works. Thou art in very deed a sinner, thou art subject to, and encumbered with, many passions. Of thy self thou always tendest to nothing; thou art quickly cast down, quickly overcome, quickly troubled, quickly dissolved. Thou hast nothing wherein thou canst glory, but many things for which thou oughtest to despise thy self; for thou art much weaker than thou art able to comprehend.

3. And therefore let nothing seem much unto thee whatsoever thou doest. Let nothing seem great, nothing precious and wonderful; let nothing seem worthy of estimation, nothing high, nothing truly and commendable to be desired, but that which is everlasting. Let the eternal Truth above all things please thee. Let thy own great unworthiness always displease thee. Fear nothing, blame and fly nothing so much as thy vices and sins; which ought to displease more than the losses of any thing whatsoever. Some walk not sincerely in my sight, but led by a certain curiosity and pride, will know my secrets, and understand the high things of God, neglecting themselves and their own salvation.

These oftentimes, for that I resist them, do fall into great temptations and sins, for their pride and curiosity.

4. Fear the judgments of God, dread the wrath of the Almighty. But discuss not the works of the highest. Search thine own iniquities, in how much thou hast offended, and how much good thou hast neglected. Some carry their religion only in Books, some in pictures, some in outward signs and figures. Some have me in their mouths, but little in their hearts. There are others that being illuminated in their understandings, and purged in their affection do always breath after things eternal, and are unwilling to hear of the things of this world, and do serve the necessities of nature with grief; and these perceive what the Spirit of Truth speaketh in them; because it teacheth them to despise Earthly, and love Heavenly things; to neglect the world, and all the day and night to desire Heaven.

C H A P. V.

Of the wonderful effect of divine Love.

C*hristian*, I praise thee, O Heavenly Father, Father of my Lord Jesus Christ for that thou hast vouchsafed to remember me a poor Creature. O Father of mercies and God of all comfort, thanks be unto thee, who sometimes with thy comfort refreshest me unworthy of all comfort. I ever bless and glorifie thee with thy only begotten Son, and the holy Ghost, for ever and ever. O Lord God, the holy lover of my soul, when thou shalt come into my heart, all that is within me will rejoyce. Thou art my glory and the exultation of my heart. Thou art my hope and refuge in the day of my tribulation.

2. But for that I am yet weak in love, and imperfect in virtue, I have need therefore to be strengthened and comforted by thee; visit me therefore often, and instruct me with thy holy discipline. Deliver me from evil passions, and heal my heart of all inordinate affections; that being cured

within and well purged, I may be made fit to Love, strong to suffer, and constant to persevere.

3. Love is a great thing, in very truth a great good ; which alone maketh every thing that is heavy, light ; and beareth equally that which is unequal. For it carrieth a Burden without a Burden, and maketh every thing that is bitter, sweet and savoury. The noble Love of Jesus forceth Man to do great things, and stirreth him up to desire always what is most perfect. Love will be aloft, and not kept down with any base thing. Love will be free and loose from all worldly affection, to the end its inward sight be not prejudiced, that it be not either entangled by any temporal prosperity, or subdued by adversity. Nothing is sweeter than Love, nothing stronger, nothing higher, nothing more large, nothing more pleasant, nothing fuller nor better in Heaven or in Earth : Because Love is born of God, and cannot rest but in God, above all Creatures.

4. He that loveth ; flyeth, runneth, and rejoyceth ; he is free and not held in. He giveth all for all, and hath all in all, for
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that he resteth in one Highest above all, from whence all good floweth and proceedeth. He respecteth not the gifts, but turneth himself above all goods unto the giver. Love oftentimes knoweth no measure, but is inflamed above all measure. Love feeleth no burden, weigheth no pains, desireth above its strength, complaineth not of impossibility, for that it thinketh all things lawful and possible. It is therefore able to undertake all things, and performeth and bringeth many things to pass; whereas he that doth not Love, fainteth and lyes down.

5. Love watcheth, and sleeping sleepeth not: Being wearied, is not tired; straitned, is not pressed; frightned, is not troubled: But like a lively flame and burning Torch, breaking upwards, and securely passeth through all. If any one loveth; he knoweth what this voice cryeth: A loud cry in the ears of God is the ardent affection of the Soul, which saith, *My God, my Love, thou art wholly mine, and I wholly thine.*

6. Enlarge me in Love, that with the inward mouth of my heart I may taste how sweet it is to Love, and to be melted, and
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swim in thy Love. Let me be possessed by Love, mounting above my self with excessive fervor and admiration. Let me Sing the Song of Love, let me follow thee on high my Beloved; let my Soul rejoicing through Love, spend it self in thy Praise. Let me Love thee more than my self, and not my self but for thee, and all in thee that truly Love thee, as the law of Love commandeth which shineth out from thee.

7. Love is swift, sincere, pious, pleasant and delightful, strong, patient, faithful, prudent, long-suffering, manly, and never seeking it self. For where one seeketh himself, there he falleth from Love. Love is circumspect, humble, and upright: not softly, nor light, not attending unto vain things, sober, chaste, constant, quiet, and guarded in all the senses. Love is subject and obedient to Superiors, mean and abject to it self, devout and thankful unto God, trusting and hoping always in him, even then when God imparteth no sweetness unto it: For without sorrow none liveth in Love.

8. He that is not ready to suffer all things, and stand to the will of his beloved,

ed, is not worthy to be called a Lover. A Lover ought to embrace willingly all that is hard and distasteful for his Beloved; and not to turn away from him for any contrary accidents.

C H A P: V I.

Of the proof of a true Lover.

C*Hrist.* Son, thou art not yet a strong and prudent Lover. *Christian.* Wherefore Lord? *Christ.* Because thou givest over for a small adversity, and too greedily seekest comfort. A strong Lover standeth firmly in temptations, and giveth not credit to the crafty persuasions of the enemy. As I please him in prosperity, so I am not unpleasant to him in adversity.

2. A prudent Lover considereth not so much the gift of his Lover, as the Love of the giver. He rather esteemeth the good will than the value, and placeth all gifts under his Beloved. A noble Lover resteth not in the gift, but in me above every gift. All therefore is not lost, if sometimes thou hast less taste of me than thou wouldest.

That

That good and sweet affection which thou sometimes feelest, is the effect of present grace, and a certain fore-taste of the heavenly Country ; whereon thou mayest not rely too much, for it goeth and cometh. But to fight against evil motions of the mind which may happen unto thee, and to despise the suggestions of the Devil, is a notable sign of virtue and shall have great reward.

3. Let not therefore strange fancies forced into thee, of any matter whatsoever, trouble thee. Retain a strong purpose and an upright intention to God. Neither is it an illusion that sometimes thou art suddenly rapt on high, and presently returnest again unto the accustomed vanities of thy heart. For thou dost rather unwillingly suffer them, than commit them : and as long as they displease thee, and thou strivest against them, it is matter of reward, and no loss,

4. Know that thy antient enemy doth ever strive to hinder thy desire to good, and to deliver thee from all religious exercise ; to wit, from the devout memory of my passion, from the profitable remembrance of thy sins, from the guard of thine
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own heart, and from the firm purpose of profiting in virtue. He injecteth many evil thoughts into thy mind, that he may cause a wearisomness and horror in thee, to draw thee from Prayer and Holy reading. Humble confession is displeasing unto him; and if he could, he would cause thee to cease from receiving the Sacrament. Trust him not, nor care for him, although he should often set snares of deceit to intrap thee. Charge him with it when he suggesteth evil and unclean thoughts unto thee; Say unto him, Away unclean Spirit, blush miserable wretch; thou art very unclean that bringest such things unto mine ears. Away from me wicked deceiver, thou shalt have no part in me: But Jesus shall be with me as a strong Warrior, and thou shalt stand confounded. I had rather die, and undergo any torment, than consent unto thee. Hold thy peace and be silent; I will hear thee no more, though thou shouldest work me many troubles. The Lord is my light and my Salvation, whom shall I fear? If whole Armies should stand together against me, my heart shall not fear. The Lord is my helper and my redeemer.

5. Fight like a good Soldier: and if thou
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sometimes fall through frailty, take greater strength than before, trusting in my more abundant grace: and take great heed of vain pleasing of thy self and of pride. This brings many into error, and makes them sometimes fall into almost incurable blindness. Let the fall of the proud foolishly presuming of themselves serve thee for a warning, and keep thee perpetually humble.

CHAP. VII.

That grace is to be hid under the veil of Humility.

C*Hrist.* Son, it is more profitable and safe for thee to hide the grace of devotion; not to extol thy self, nor to speak much, nor to esteem much thereof, but rather to despise thy self, and fear it, as given to one unworthy thereof. This affection is not to be cleaved unto, which may be quickly changed unto the contrary. Think when thou art in grace, how miserable and needy thou art wont to be without grace. Neither doth therein only consist,

sist, the proficiency of a spiritual life, when thou hast the grace of comfort ; but when thou humbly, self-denyingly and patiently sufferest the withdrawing thereof, so that thou be not then less diligent in the exercise of prayer, nor suffer the rest of thy accustomed duties to be neglected ; but that thou willingly perform what lieth in thee, according to the best of thy power and understanding, not neglecting thy self wholly for the dryness and trouble of mind which thou feelest.

2. There are many that when it succeedeth not well with them, presently they become impatient or slothful. The way of Man is not always in his power, but it belongeth to God to give and to comfort when he will, and how much he will, and whom he will ; as it shall please him, and no more. Some unadvised persons have overthrown themselves for the *greedy desire which they had* of the grace of devotion ; attempting more than they were able to perform, not weighing the measure of their weakness, but following rather the desire of their heart, than the judgment of reason. And because they presumed on greater matters than was pleasing to God, they quickly

quickly lost his grace. They became needy, and left in a dejected estate, that built themselves nests in Heaven; to the end that being humbled and impoverished, they might learn not to flie with their own wings, but to trust under my wings. They that are yet but novices and unacquainted in the way of the Lord, unless they govern themselves by the counsel of discreet Persons, may easily be deceived and overthrown.

3. And if they will rather follow their own judgment, than give credit to others that are experienced, their end will be dangerous, if they will not be drawn from their own conceit. Seldom those that are selfwise suffer themselves humbly to be governed by others. A little knowledg with Humility, and a slender understanding, is better than great measures of learning with a vain self-liking. It is better for thee to have little than much of that whereof thou mayest be proud. He doth not discreetly, that wholly giveth himself over to mirth, forgetting his former poverty, and the chaste fear of God, which feareth to lose the grace which he hath obtained. Neither is he virtuously wise, that in time of
adversity

adversity or any tribulation whatsoever, yieldeth to despairing thoughts and thinketh and imagineth of me less confidently than he ought.

4. He that will be over secure in time of peace, shall be often found in time of war too dejected and fearful. If thou couldest always continue humble and lowly within thy self, and order and govern thy spirit well, thou shouldest not so soon fall into danger and offence. It is good counsel, that when fervor of spirit is kindled within thee, thou shouldest think what will become of thee, when that light shall leave thee. And when that doth happen, remember the light may return again, which for thy instruction and my glory I have withdrawn for a time.

5. Such proof is often more profitable, than if thou shouldest always enjoy prosperity according to thy desire. For a Mans worthiness is not to be judged by the number of visions and comforts which he hath, or by his knowledg in Scripture, or by his being placed in high degree; but in that he is grounded in true humility, and filled with divine love; if he always purely and entirely seek the honor of God, if he esteem

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himself

himself nothing, and unfriendly despise himself, and rejoyce more to be despised and humbled by others, than to be honored.

CHAP. VIII.

Of a mean conceit of our selves in the sight of God.

C*Hristian.* Shall I speak unto my Lord sith I am Dust and Ashes? If I esteem better of my self, behold thou standest against me, and my iniquities bear true witness *against me*: Neither can I speak against it. But if I abase and esteem nothing of my self, and cast off all self-esteem, and (as I am) account my self to be Dust, thy grace will be favorable unto me, and thy light will be near unto my heart; and all self-esteem, how little soever shall be swallowed up in the deep Valley of my nothingness, and perish everlastingly. There thou shewest my self unto me, what I am, what I have been, and whither I am come; for I am nothing, and I knew ^{not} it. And if I be left to my self, behold I become nothing but mere weakness. But if thou suddenly
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look upon me, I am presently made strong, and filled with new joy. And it is a great marvel, that I am so suddenly lifted up, and so graciously embraced by thee, that of mine own weight always sink downward.

2. Thy Love is cause hereof, freely preventing me, and relieving me in so many necessities, preserving me also from grievous dangers, and delivering me (as I may truly say) from innumerable evils. For surely by inordinate loving my self, I lost my self and by seeking thee alone, and purely loving thee, I have found both my self and thee, and by that Love have more deeply brought my self to nothing. For that thou, O most sweet Lord, dealest with me above all desert, and above all that I dare hope and request.

3. Blessed be thou my God; for although I be unworthy of any benefits, yet the nobleness of thy bounty and thy infinite goodness never ceaseth to do good even to the ungrateful, and to them that be turned away far from thee. Turn us unto thee, O Lord, that we may be thankful, humble, and holy; for thou art our safety, our power, and our strength.

C H A P. IX.

That all things are to be referred unto God, as unto the last end.

Chrift. Son, I ought to be thy chiefest and last end, if thou desirest to be truly blessed. With this intention thy affection shall be purified which is oftentimes inclined inordinately to it self and unto Creatures. For if in any thing thou seekest thy self, thou presently faintest and driest up within thy self. Refer therefore all things chiefly unto me, for I am he that have given all. Consider every thing as flowing from the Highest good; and therefore all things are to be reduced unto me as unto their Original.

2. Out of me, as out of a living Fountain, the little and the great, the poor and the rich, to draw the water of life: and they that willingly and freely serve me, shall receive grace for grace. But he that will glory out of me, or be delighted in any particular good, shall not be grounded in true joy, nor enlarged in his heart, but shall be many ways encumbred and straitened.

ned. Thou oughtest therefore to ascribe nothing of good unto thy self, nor attribute goodness unto any Man; but give all unto God, without whom Man hath nothing. I have bestowed all, and will that all be returned unto me again; and with great strictness I require thanks.

3. This is the truth that putteth to flight vain Glory, and if heavenly grace and true Love enter in, there shall be no envy nor straitness of heart, neither shall there be any place for self-love. For Divine Love overcometh all, and enlargeth all the powers of the Soul. If thou beest truly wise, in me alone thou wilt rejoyce, in me alone thou wilt hope: For none is good, but God alone, who is to be praised above all things, and to be blessed in all.

C H A P. X.

That the world being despised, it is a sweet thing to serve God.

C*hristian.* Now I will speak again, O Lord, and will not be silent, I will say in the ears of my God, my Lord, and
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my King that is on High, *Psalm. 31.* *O how great is the abundance of thy goodness, O Lord, which thou hast laid up for those that fear thee!* But what art thou to them that Love thee? What to them that serve thee with their whole heart? Truly unspeakable is the sweetness of contemplating thee, which thou bestowest on them that Love thee. In this chiefly thou hast shewed me the sweetness of thy Love: For that when I was not, thou madest me; and when I went astray far off from thee, thou broughtest me back again, that I might serve thee, and hast commanded me to Love thee.

2. O Fountain of everlasting Love, what shall I say of thee? How can I forget thee, that hast vouchsafed to remember me, even when I wasted away, and perished? Thou hast shewed mercy to thy Servant beyond all my expectation: And hast exhibited thy favor and friendship beyond all merit. What shall I return unto thee for this grace. For it is not granted to every one to forsake all things, to renounce the World, and to undertake a life of Religious retiredness. It is much that I should serve thee, whom all Creatures are bound to serve. It ought not to seem much
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unto me to serve thee; but this rather seemeth much and marvellous unto me that thou vouchsafest to receive into thy service one so poor and unworthy, and to joyn him with thy beloved Servants.

3. Behold, all is thine which I have, and whereby I serve thee. And yet contrarywise thou rather serveest me than I thee. Behold, Heaven and Earth, which thou hast created for the service of Man are ready at hand, and do daily perform whatsoever thou dost command; and this is little; yea, thou hast also appointed the Angels to the service of Man. But that which excelleth all this is, that thou thy self hast vouchsafed to serve Man, and hast promised to give thy self unto him.

4. What shall I give thee for all these thousands of benefits? I would I could serve thee all the days of my life. I would I were able at least for one day, to do thee some worthy service! Thou art truly worthy of all service, of all honor, and everlasting praise. Thou art truly my Lord, and I thy poor Servant, that am bound to serve thee with all my might, neither ought I ever to be weary of praising thee. And

this I wish to do, this I desire ; and whatsoever is wanting unto me, vouchsafe I beseech thee to supply.

5. It is great honor, a great glory to serve thee, and despise all things for thee. For great grace shall be given to them that shall willingly subject themselves to thy most holy service, They shall receive the most sweet comfort of the holy Ghost, that for thy love shall renounce all carnal delights, they shall attain great freedom of mind, that for thy names sake shall enter into the narrow way, and shall have left off all worldly care.

6. O sweet and delightful service of God, by which Man is truly made free and holy! O sacred state of religious employment, which maketh Man equal to Angels, pleasing to God, terrible to Devils, grateful and of great esteem to all the faithful ! O service to be imbraced and always wished for by which we obtain the greatest good, and attain to that joy which never shall have end !

C H A P. XI.

That the desires of our heart are to be examined and moderated.

C*Hrist.* Son, thou oughtest to learn many things more, which thou hast not well learned.

Christian. What are those Lord?

Christ. That thou frame thy desires wholly according to my pleasure; and be not a lover of thy self, but an affectionate follower of my will. Thy desires oftentimes enflame thee, and drive thee forwards with violence: But consider whether thou art moved rather for my honor, than for thine own profit. If I be the cause, thou wilt be well content with whatsoever I shall ordain: But if there lurk in thee any self-seeking, behold this is it that hindereth thee and weigheth thee down.

2. Beware therefore thou lean not too much upon thy own preconceived desire, without asking my counsel, lest perhaps afterwards it repent thee, and thou begin now to dislike that which before did please thee, and which thou earnestly desiredst
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as the best. For every affection that seemeth good is not presently to be followed; nor every contrary affection at the first to be avoided. It is expedient sometimes to use a restraint even in good desires and endeavors, lest by importunity thou incurre distraction of mind, and by thy want of self-government beget a scandal unto others; or being gainsaid by others thou be suddenly troubled and fall.

3. Yet sometimes thou oughtest to use violence, and resist manfully thy sensual appetites, and respect not what the flesh would, or would not; but rather to labor that even perforce it be subject to the spirit. And it is to be chastised so long, and to be forced under servitude, until it readily obey in all things, and learn to be content with a little, and to be pleased with plain things, and not to murmur against any inconvenience.

C H A P. XII.

Of patience, and of striving against concupiscence.

C*Hristian.* Lord God, I perceive patience is very necessary unto me, for that many adversities do happen in this life. For howsoever I shall dispose of my peace, my life cannot be without war and affliction.

Christ. So it is Son. And my will is not that thou seek after that peace which is void of temptations, or that which feelth no contrariety; but then think that thou hast found peace, when thou art exercised with sundry tribulations, and tried in many adversities.

2. If thou say, that thou art not able to suffer much, how then wilt thou endure the Fire hereafter? Of two evils the less is always to be chosen. That thou maist therefore avoid everlasting punishment in the next World, endeavor to suffer patiently for God the present evils of this. Dost thou think that the Men of this World suffer little or nothing? Look into the life
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even of them that live in greatest delicacies, and thou shalt find it otherwise. But thou wilt say they have many delights, and follow their own wills, and therefore they make small account of their tribulations: Be it so, that they have whatsoever they will; but how long dost thou think it will last?

3. Behold, the wealthy of this World vanish away like smoak, and there shall be no memory of their joys past. Yea, even while they live also, they rest not in them without bitterness, irksomeness and fear. For the self same thing in which they take their delight, is oftentimes unto them the cause of sorrow. They have their desert, who for that they inordinately seek and follow delights, they do not enjoy them but with shame and sorrow.

4. O how short and false, how inordinate and filthy are all those pleasures! Yet so Drunken and Blind are Men that they understand it not: But like Dumb beasts, for a little pleasure of a corruptible life, they incur the *Eternal* death of their Soul. Do not thou therefore my Son, go after thy Lusts, but forsake thine own will, *Psal. 37. Delight in the Lord, and he will give thee the desires of thy heart.*

5. For

5. For if thou desire true delight, and to be more plentifully comforted by me, behold, in the contempt of all wordly things, and in the cutting off all base delights shall be thy blessing, and abundant comforts shall be given thee. And how much the more thou withdrawest thy self from all comfort of Creatures, so much the sweeter and more powerful consolations shalt thou find in me. But at first thou canst not attain unto them without some sorrow, nor without a laborious conflict. Thy old custom will make resistance, and thou must overcome it with another custom that is better. Thy flesh will murmur; but thou must bridle it with fervor of Spirit. The old Serpent will sting and trouble thee; but by Prayer he shall be put to flight, and by profitable industry thou shalt stop the way against him.

C H A P. XIII.

Of the humble obedience of a Subject, according to the example of Christ.

C*Hrist.* Son, he that endeavoreth to withdraw himself from obedience, withdraweth himself from grace. And he that seeketh things private, shall lose the publick. He that doth not willingly and freely submit himself to his Superior, it is a sign that his flesh is not as yet perfectly obedient unto him, but oftentimes kicketh, and murmureth against him. Learn therefore readily to submit thy self to thy Superior, if thou desirest to subdue thine own flesh. For the outward enemy is sooner overcome, if the inward Man be not wasted. There is no worse enemy, nor more troublesome to the Soul, than thou art unto thy self, not agreeing well with the Spirit. Thou must of necessity have a true contempt of thy self, if thou wilt prevail against flesh and blood.

2. Because thou lovest thy self as yet too inordinately, therefore thou art afraid to resign thy self wholly to the will of others.

But

But what great matter is it, if thou, that art Dust and nothing, submit thy self to a Man for God, when I the Almighty and highest Sovereign who created all things of nothing, humbly submitted my self unto Man for thee? I became the most humble and abject of all Men, that thou mightest overcome thy pride with my humility. Learn to obey thou that art Dust. Learn to humble thy self thou Earth and Clay, and put thy self under the Feet of all Men. Learn to break thine own will, and to yield thy self to all Subjection.

3. Be vehement against thy self, and suffer not pride to live in thee: But so humble and submit thy self to all, that every one may go over thee, and tread thee as dirt of the Streets under their Feet. Vain Man, what canst thou complain of? What canst thou answer, foul sinner, to them that reprove thee, who hast so often offended God, and so many times deserved Heil? But mine eye hath spared thee, because thy Soul was precious in my sight; that thou mightest know my Love, and always remain thankful for my benefits; and that thou mightest continually give thy self to true subjection and humility, and mightest

mightest bear patiently the contempt of thy self.

CHAP. XIV.

Of the secret Judgments of God to be considered, lest we be exalted in our good deeds.

C*hristian.* Thou thunderest forth thy Judgments over me, O Lord, and shakest all my bones with fear and trembling, and my Soul is sore afraid. I stand astonished, when I consider that the Heavens are not pure in thy sight. If thou hast found wickedness in Angels, and hast not pardoned them, what shall become of me? Stars fell from Heaven, and what do I presume that am Dust? They whose works seemed commendable, fell into the lowest misery: And I have seen them, that did eat the Bread of Angels, to be delighted with the husks of Swine.

2. There is therefore no sanctity, if thou, O Lord, withdrawest thy hand. No wisdom availeth, if thou ceaseest to Govern. No strength helpeth, if thou leavest to defend. No chastity is secure, if thou dost not protect

protect it. No custody of our own profitable, if thy sacred watchfulness be not present. For, if we be left of thee, we sink and perish; but if thou vouchsafest to visit us, we are raised up and live. We are inconstant, but by thee we are established: we wax cold, but by thee we are enflamed.

3. O how meanly and humbly ought I to think of my self! how little, yea nothing ought I to esteem it, if I seem to have any good! O Lord, with what profound Humility ought I to submit my self to thy bottomless judgements; where I find my self to be nothing else, but nothing, and nothing! O unmeasurable weight! O sea that can never be passed over, where I find my self only and wholly nothing! Where then is the lurking hole of glory? Where is the confidence conceived of virtue? All vain glorying is swallowed up in the deep of thy judgements over me.

4. What is all flesh in thy sight? Shall the clay glory against him that frameth it? How can he be lifted up with vain words, whose heart is truly subject to God? All the world cannot lift him up, whom the Truth hath subjected unto it self. Neither

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shall

shall he be moved with the Tongues of all his praisers, that hath setled his whole hope in God. For as for them that speak, behold, they all are nothing; they shall pass away with the sound of their words; but the truth of the Lord remaineth for ever.

C H A P. XV.

How we are to stand affected, and what we are to say, in every thing which we desire.

C*Hrist.* Son, say thus in every thing, Lord, if it be pleasing unto thee, let this be done in this sort; Lord, if it be to thy honor, let this be done in thy Name; Lord, if thou seest it expedient for me, and allowest it to be profitable, then grant unto me, that I may use this unto thine honor. But if thou knowest it will be hurtful unto me, and not profitable to the health of my soul, take away this desire from me. For every desire proceedeth not from the holy Ghost, though it seem unto Man right and good. It is hard to judge rightly whether a good Spirit or the contrary

trary drive thee to desire this or that; or whether also by thine own spirit thou be moved thereunto. Many are deceived in the end, who at the first seemed to be led by a good Spirit.

2. Always therefore, whatsoever occur-
reth unto thy mind to be desired, let it be desired and prayed for in the fear of God and with Humility of heart; and above all thou oughtest to commit the whole unto me with resignation of thy self, and thou oughtest to say, Lord thou knowest what is best, let this or that be done as thou pleasest. Give what thou wilt, and how much thou wilt, and when thou wilt. Deal with me as thou thinkest good, and as best pleaseth thee, and is most for thy honor. Set me, where thou wilt, and deal with me in all things according to thy will. I am in thy hand; turn me, and turn me again which way soever thou please. Behold I am thy Servant, prepared for all things; for I desire not to live unto my self, but unto thee; and O that I could do it worthily and perfectly!

A Prayer for the fulfilling of the will of God.

3. Grant me thy Grace O most gracious Jesus, that it may be with me, and labor with me, and persevere with me until the end. Grant me always to desire and will that which is most acceptable unto thee, and best pleaseth thee. Let thy will be mine, and let my will ever follow thine, and agree perfectly with it. Let my will and nill be all one with thine, and let me not will or nill any thing else, but what thou wilt or nill.

4. Grant that I may die to all things that are in the World, and to love to be contemned for thy sake and not to be known in this world. Grant that above all things that can be desired, I may rest in thee, and may quiet my heart in thee. Thou art the true peace of the heart, thou art the only rest; out of thee all things are troublesom and unquiet. In this very peace, that is, in thee, the one chiefest eternal Good, I will sleep and rest. Amen.

C H A P. XVI.

That true comfort is to be sought in God alone,

WHatsoever I can desire or imagine for my comfort, I look not for it here, but hereafter. For if I should alone have all the comforts of the world, and might enjoy all the delights thereof, it is certain that they could not long endure. Wherefore my soul, thou canst not be fully comforted, nor have perfect delight but in God, the comforter of the poor, and the helper of the humble. Expect a while, O my soul, expect the divine promise and thou shalt have abundance of all good things in Heaven. If thou desire inordinately the things that are present, thou shalt lose the celestial and eternal. Use temporal things, and desire eternal. Thou canst not be filled with any temporal goods, because thou art not created to enjoy them.

2. Although thou shouldest enjoy all created good, yet couldst thou not be happy thereby nor blessed; but in God, that hath created all things, thy whole

beatitude and happiness consisteth; not such as is seen, and commended by the foolish lovers of the world, but such as the good and faithful Servants of Christ expect, and the spiritual and pure in heart, whose conversation is in Heaven, sometimes have a foretast of. Vain and short is all humane comfort. Blessed and true is the comfort which is received inwardly from the Truth. A Religious Man every where carrieth with him Jesus his comforter, and saith unto him, Be present with me Lord Jesus in every place and time. Let this be my comfort, to be willing to want all humane comfort. And if thy comfort be wanting, let thy will and just proving of me be unto me as the greatest comfort; for thou wilt not be angry always, neither wilt thou threaten for ever.

CHAP. XVII.

That all our care is to be placed in God.

C*Hrist.* Son, suffer me to do with thee what I please. I know what is expedient for thee. Thou thinkest as Man; thou

thou judgest in many things as humane affection perswadeth thee.

Christian. Lord, what thou sayest is true. Thy care for me is greater than all the care that I can take for my self. For he standeth very totteringly, that casteth not his whole care upon thee. Lord so that my will may remain right and firm towards thee, do with me whatsoever it shall please thee. For it cannot be but good whatsoever thou doest with me.

2. If it be thy will I should be in darkness, be thou blessed; and if it be thy will I should be in light, be thou again Blessed. If thou vouchsafest to comfort me, be thou Blessed; and if thou wilt afflict me, be thou ever equally blessed.

Christ. Son, Thus thou oughtest to be minded, if thou wilt walk with me. Thou must be as ready to suffer, as to rejoyce. Thou oughtest to be as willing to be poor and needy, as full and rich.

3. *Christian.* Lord, I will willingly suffer for thee, whatsoever thy pleasure is shall befall me. I will receive indifferently from thy hand good and evil, sweet and lowre, delightful and sorrowful, and give thee thanks for all that befall me.

Keep me from all sin, and I will neither fear death nor Hell ; so as thou dost not for ever cast me from thee, nor blot me out of the Book of life, what tribulation soever befall me shall not hurt me.

CHAP. XVIII.

That temporal miseries after the example of Christ, must be born patiently.

C*hrist.* Son, I descended from Heaven for thy Salvation ; I took upon me thy miseries, my own love and not any necessity drawing me thereunto ; that thou mightest learn patience, and not grudgingly bear temporal miseries. For from the hour of my birth, until my death on the Cross, I was not without suffering of grief. I suffered great want of temporal things ; I often heard many complaints against me ; I bore patiently shame and reproaches ; for benefits I received ingratitude ; for miracles, blasphemies ; for Heavenly Doctrine, reprehensions.

2. *Christian.*

2. *Christian.* Lord, for that thou wert patient in thy life-time, chiefly fulfilling herein the commandment of thy Father, it is reason that I a miserable sinner should shew my self patient according to thy will, and for my souls welfare bear the burden of this corruptible life as long as thou wilt. For although this present life be burdensom, yet notwithstanding it is now by thy grace made very gainful; and by thy example and the footsteps of thy Saints, more plain and tolerable to the weak. Yea, much more comfortable also than it was in times past in the old Law, when the gate of Heaven remained shut, and the way also to Heaven seemed darker, when so few took care to seek after thy Kingdom. Neither they also that then were just and such as should be saved, could enter into the Heavenly Kingdom, before the satisfaction of thy holy passion and death.

3. O how many and great thanks am I bound to render unto thee, that thou hast vouchsafed to shew unto me and to all the faithful a direct and sure way to thy everlasting Kingdom! For thy life is our way, and by holy patience we go unto thee that art our Crown. If thou hadst not gone
before

before us and taught us, who would have taken care to follow? Alas! How many would stay behind and remain far off, if they beheld not thy noble example? Behold we are yet cold, although we have heard of so many of thy wonders, and thy *Heavenly* documents; what would become of us, if we had not so great a light *given us* to follow thee?

C H A P. XIX.

Of suffering of injuries: and who is proved to be truly patient.

C*Hrist.* What is it thou sayest, Son? Cease to complain, considering my passion, and that of my other Saints. Thou hast not yet made resistance unto blood. It is but little thou sufferest, in comparison of them that have suffered so much, were so strongly tempted, so grievously afflicted, so many ways tried and exercised. Thou oughtest therefore to call to mind the more heavy sufferings of others, that thou mayest the easier bear the little adversities which thou sufferest. And if they seem not little
unto

unto thee, beware lest thy impatience be cause thereof. Yet whether they be little or great, endeavor to bear all patiently.

2. How much the **better** thou disposest thy self to suffering, so much the more wisely thou doest, and so much the greater reward shalt thou receive; thou shalt more easily also endure it, if both in mind and by exercise thou art well prepared thereunto. Do not say, I cannot suffer these things at the hands of such a person, nor such things are not to be suffered by me: for he hath done me great wrong, and upbraided me with those things which I never thought of; but of another I will willingly suffer, and as I shall see cause. Such a thought is foolish; it considereth not the virtue of patience, nor by whom it shall be crowned; but rather weigheth the persons, and the injuries offered.

3. He is not truly patient, that will not suffer but as much as he thinketh good, and by whom he listeth. But the true patient Man mindeth not by whom he is exercised, whether by his Superiors, or some of his equals, or by his inferiors; whether by a good and holy Man, or by a perverse and

and unworthy person. But indifferently from all creatures, how much soever, or how often soever any adversity befaller him, he taketh all this thankfully as from the hands of God, and esteemeth it a great gain; for that nothing before God, how little soever, so it be suffered for God, shall pass without its reward.

4. Be thou therefore always prepared for the fight, if thou wilt have the victory. Without a combat thou canst not attain unto the crown of patience. If thou wilt not suffer, thou refusest to be crowned. But if thou desirest to be crowned, fight manfully, and endure patiently. Without labor there is no coming to rest, nor without fighting can the victory be obtained.

Christian. Lord, let that be made possible to me by thy grace, which seemeth impossible to me by nature. Thou knowest that I can suffer but little, and that I am quickly dismayed, when a small adversity ariseth. Let every exercise of tribulation be made amiable unto me, and be welcom for thy name; for to suffer and to be troubled for thy sake, is very profitable for my soul.

C H A P. XX.

*Of the acknowledging of our own infirmities :
and of the miseries of this life.*

C*hristian.* I will confess against me my unrighteousness, I will confess unto thee, O Lord, my infirmities. Oftentimes it is a small matter that dejecteth and grieveth me. I purpose to act with courage, but when a small temptation cometh, it bringeth me into very narrow straits. It is sometimes a very trifle, from whence great temptations do proceed. And whilst I think my self somewhat safe, when I least expect it I find my self sometimes overcome with a small blast.

2. Behold, therefore, Lord, my low-ness and frailty every way known unto thee. Have mercy on me and deliver me out of the mire that I stick not fast therein, and that I may not for ever remain dejected. This is that which oftentimes strikes me at the very heart, and confounds me in thy sight, for that I am so subject to fall, and weak in resisting of my passions. And al-though

though I do not altogether consent, yet their continual assaults are troublesome and grievous unto me; and it is a very irksome thing to live thus daily in conflict. Hereby my infirmity is made known unto me, for that wicked fancies do always much more easily invade than forsake me.

3. O mighty God of Israel, the zealous lover of faithful souls, let it please thee to consider the labor and sorrow of thy Servant, and assist him in all whatsoever he undertaketh. Strengthen me with Heavenly strength, lest the old Man, the miserable flesh, not fully as yet subject to the spirit, prevail and get the upper hand; against which I ought to fight as long as I breath in this miserable life. Alas, what a kind of life is this, where tribulation and miseries are never wanting! where all is full of snares, and enemies! For when one tribulation or temptation goeth away, another first cometh; yea and during the first conflict also, many others come unlooked for one after another.

4. And how can a life beloved that hath so many embitterments, and is subject to so many calamities and miseries? How is it called a life that begetteth so many deaths
and

and plagues? And yet it is loved, and many seek to delight themselves therein. The world is oftentimes blamed that it is deceitful and vain, and yet it is not easily forsaken, because the desires of the flesh bear so great a sway.

5. Some things draw us to love it, others to contemn it. To the love of the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life do draw us; but the pains and miseries that do justly follow them cause a hatred and loathsomeness thereof.

6. But alas! vile pleasure overcometh the mind which is addicted to the world; and she esteemeth it a delight to be even under thorns, because she hath neither seen nor tasted the sweetness of God, and the inward pleasantness of virtue. But they that perfectly contemn the world, and endeavor to live to God under holy discipline, these are not ignorant of the divine sweetness promised to the true forsakers of the world, and do more clearly see how grievously the world erreth, and how it is many ways deceived.

C H A P. XXI.

*That we are to rest in God above all
his gifts, and benefits.*

C*hristian.* Above all things, and in all things, O my soul, thou shalt ever rest in the Lord, for he is the everlasting rest of the Saints. Grant me, O most sweet and loving Jesus, to rest in thee above all creatures, above all health and beauty, above all glory and honor, above all power and dignity, above all knowledg and subtilty, above all riches and arts, above all joy and gladness, above all fame and praise, above all sweetness and comfort, above all hope and promise, above all desert and desire, above all gifts and presents that thou canst give and impart unto us, above all mirth and jubilee that the mind of Man can receive and feel; lastly, above Angels and Archangels and above all the Heavenly host, above all visible and invisible things, and above all that thou art not, O my God.

2. For that thou, my Lord God, art best of all; thou alone art most high, thou alone

alone most powerful, thou alone most full and sufficient, thou alone most sweet and solacing, thou alone most lovely and loving, thou alone most noble and glorious above all things, in whom all good things together both perfectly are, and ever have been, and shall be: and therefore it is too little and not sufficient, whatsoever thou bestowest on me besides thy self, or revealest unto me of thy self, or promisest, whilst thou art not seen, and not fully obtained; for surely my heart cannot truly rest nor be fully contented, unless it rest in thee, and surmount all gifts and creatures whatsoever.

3. O my most beloved Bridegroom Jesus Christ, the most pure lover, the governor of all creatures; O that I had the wings of true liberty that I might flie and rest in thee! O when shall it be fully granted me to consider in quietness of mind and see how sweet thou art, my Lord God! When shall I fully gather up my self into thee; that by reason of my love to thee I may not feel my self, but thee alone, above all sense and feeling, in a manner not known unto every one! but now I oftentimes sigh, and bear my infelicity with grief, for that ma-

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ny evils occur in this vale of miseries, which do often trouble, grieve, and overcloud me; often hinder and distract me, allure and intangle me, for that I can have no free access unto thee, nor enjoy thy sweet embracings wherewith thou ever favor-est the blessed Spirits. O let my sighs and manifold desolations on Earth affect thee.

4. O Jesus, the brightness of eternal glory, and comfort of the pilgrim soul, with thee is my tongue without voice, and my very silence speaketh unto thee. How long doth my Lord delay to come? Let him come unto me his poor Servant, and make me glad. Let him put forth his hand and deliver miserable me from all anguish. Come, O come; for without thee I shall have no joyful day nor hour; for thou art my joy, and without thee my table is empty. A wretched creature I am, and in a manner imprisoned and loaden with Irons, until thou comfortest me with the light of thy presence, and settest me at liberty, and shewest a friendly countenance unto me.

5. Let others seek what they please instead of thee: but for me, nothing else doth

doth nor shall delight me, but thou only my God, my hope, my everlasting salvation. I will not hold my peace, nor cease to pray, until thy grace return again, and thou speak inwardly unto me.

Christ. Behold I am here; behold I come unto thee, because thou hast called upon me. Thy tears and the desire of thy soul, thy humiliation and the contrition of thy heart, have inclined and brought me unto thee.

Christian. And I said, Lord, I have called thee, and have desired to enjoy thee, being ready to refuse all things for thee. For thou first hast stirred me up that I might seek thee. Blessed be thou therefore, O Lord, that hast shewed this goodness to thy Servant, according to the multitude of thy mercies.

6. What hath thy servant more to say before thee, but that he do greatly humble himself in thy sight, always mindful of his own iniquity, and vileness? For there is none like unto thee in all whatsoever is wonderful in Heaven and Earth. Thy works are very good, thy judgments true, and by thy providence all things are governed. Praise therefore and glory be

unto thee, O wisdom of the Father: let my mouth, my soul, and all creatures together praise and bless thee.

CHAP. XXII.

Of the remembrance of the manifold benefits of God.

C*hristian.* Open, O Lord, my heart in thy Law, and teach me to walk in thy Commandments. Grant me to understand thy will, and to remember thy benefits as well in general, as in particular, with great reverence and diligent consideration; that henceforward I may be able worthily to give thee thanks. But I know, and confess, that I am not able in the least point to give thee, due thanks, for the favors which thou bestowest upon me. I am less than the least of all thy benefits; and when I consider thy noble bounty, the greatness thereof maketh my spirit to faint.

2. All that we have in our soul and body and whatsoever we possess outwardly or inwardly, naturally or supernaturally, are thy

thy benefits, and do speak thee bountiful, merciful, and good, from whom we have received all good things. Although one have received more, another less; all notwithstanding are thine, and without thee even the least cannot be had. He that hath received greater cannot glory of his own desert, nor extol himself above others, nor insult over the lesser; for he is greater and better that ascribeth least unto himself, and is more humble and religious in rendring thanks. And he that esteemeth himself vilest of all Men, and judgeth himself most unworthy, is fittest to receive great blessings.

3. And he that hath received fewer, ought not to be sorry nor take it grievously, nor envy them that are enriched with greater store; but attend rather unto thee, and highly praise thy goodness, for that thou bestowest thy gifts so bountifully, so freely, and so willingly without respect of persons. All things proceed from thee, and therefore in all things thou art to be praised. Thou knowest what is fit to be given to every one; and why this Man hath less, and he more, it is not ours, but thine to judge, who dost exactly know what is meet for every one.

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4. Wherefore, my Lord God, I esteeme it as a great mercy, not to have much of that which outwardly and in the opinion of Men, might seem worthy of glory and applause: so that he who considereth the poverty and unworthiness of his person, ought not therefore to conceive grief or sorrow, or to be therefore troubled, but rather to take great comfort, and to be glad: for that thou O God hast chosen the poor and humble and the despised of this world for thy self, and for thy familiar and domestick attendants. Witnesses are thy Apostles themselves, whom thou hast made Princes in all the Earth. And yet they lived without complaint in the world, so humble and simple, without all malice and deceit, that they also rejoyced to suffer reproach for thy Name, and what the world abhorreth, they embraced with great affection.

5. Nothing therefore ought so to rejoyce him that loveth thee and acknowledgeth thy benefits, as thy will in him, and the good pleasure of thy eternal appointment; wherewith he ought to be so contented and comforted, that he would as willingly be the least, as any would wish to be the great-

greatest, and as peaceable and contented in the last as in the first place; and as willing to be despised and contemned and to be of no esteem or account, as to be preferred in honor before all others and to be greater in the world. For thy will and the love of thy glory ought to be preferred before all things, and to comfort him more, and please him better, than all the benefits which either he hath received or may receive.

C H A P. XXIII.

Of Four things that bring much peace.

C*hrist.* Son, now I will teach thee the way of peace, and true liberty.

Christian, Do Lord, I beseech thee, as thou sayest, for I shall be very glad to hear it.

Christ. Endeavor, my Son, to do rather the will of another, than thine own. Ever choose rather to have less than more. Always seek the lowest place, and to be inferior to every one. Wish always and pray, that the will of God may be wholly fulfilled

filled in thee.* Behold such a Man entrench into the bounds of peace and quietness.

2. *Christian.* Lord, this thy short speech containeth much perfection. It is little in words, but full in sense and abundant in fruit. For if it could faithfully be kept by me, then should I not so easily be troubled. For as often as I feel my self unquiet and afflicted, I find that I have strayed from this Doctrine. But thou that canst do all things, and ever lovest the profiting of my soul, increase in me thy grace, that I may fulfil thy words, and work out mine own salvation.

A Prayer against evil thoughts.

3. My Lord God, be not far from me; my God, have regard to help me; for sundry thoughts have risen up against me, and great fears, afflicting my soul. How shall I pass through them without hurt? How shall I utterly break them?

Christ. I, saith he, will go before thee, and will humble the great ones of the earth, I will open the Doors of the Prison, and reveal unto thee hidden secrets.

Christian

Christian. Do Lord as thou sayest, and let all my evil thoughts fly from before thy face. This is my hope, my only comfort, to fly unto thee in every tribulation, to trust in thee, to call upon thee from my heart, and to expect patiently thy comfort.

A Prayer for enlightning of the Mind.

4. Enlighten me O good Jesus, with a clear-shining inward light, and drive away all darkness from the habitation of my heart. Repress my many wandring thoughts, and utterly break in pieces those temptations which violently assault me. Fight strongly for me, and vanquish those evil beasts, I mean those inticing desires of the flesh, that so peace may be obtained, by thy power, and that abundance of thy praise may sound in the holy Court of a pure conscience. Command the Winds and Tempests; say unto the Sea, Be still; and to the North Wind, Blow not; and a great calm shall ensue.

5. Send forth thy light and thy truth, that they may shine upon the earth; for I am as the earth without form and void,
until

until thou enlighten me. Pour out thy grace from above, let thy Heavenly dew distil upon my heart, supply fresh streams of grace, to water the face of the Earth, that it may bring forth good and excellent fruit. Lift up my mind which is pressed down by the weight of sins. Draw up my whole desire to Heavenly things; that having tasted the sweetness of supernal happiness, it may be irksome to me even to think of earthly vanities.

6. Pluck me and deliver me from all the unlasting comfort of creatures; for no created thing can fully comfort and quiet my desire. Joyn me unto thee with an unseparable band of love; for thou even alone dost satisfie him that loveth thee, and without thee all things are vain.

CHAP. XXIV.

Of flying curious inquiry of the life of others.

C*Hrist.* Son, be not curious, trouble not thy self with idle cares. What is this or that to thee? do thou follow me. For what is it to thee, whether that Man be such or no, or whether this Man do, or
speak

Speak this or that? Thou shalt not need to answer for others, but shalt give account of thy self. Why therefore dost thou trouble thy self? Behold I know every one, and do see all things that are under the Sun, and do understand how it is with every one; what he thinks, what he would, and at what his intention aims. All things therefore are to be committed unto me; but do thou keep thy self in good peace, and let the unquiet be as unquiet as they will. Whatsoever they shall have done, or said, shall fall upon themselves, for they cannot deceive me.

2. Be not careful for the shadow of a great name, or for the familiarity of many; nor for the private affection of Men: for these things both distract and greatly darken the heart. I would willingly utter my words, and reveal my secrets unto thee, if thou didst diligently observe my coming, and didst open the Door of thy heart unto me. Be careful and watch in prayer, and humble thy self in all things.

C H A P. XXV.

*wherein the firm peace of the heart, and true
spiritual profiting consisteth?*

CHrist. Son, I have said, *Peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you.* All do desire peace, but all care not for those things that appertain unto true peace. My peace is with the humble and meek of heart. Thy peace doth consist in much patience. If thou wilt hear me and follow my voice, thou mayst enjoy much peace.

Christian. What then shall I do, Lord?

Christ. In every thing attend unto thy self what thou doest, and what thou sayest; and direct thy whole intention unto this, that thou mayst please me alone, and desire or seek nothing besides me. Of the sayings and doings of others judg nothing rashly: neither do thou entangle thy self with things not committed unto thee: and doing thus, thou shalt be little or seldom troubled.

2. But never to feel any trouble at all,

nor

nor to suffer any grief of heart or body, is not the state of this life, but everlasting rest. Think not therefore that thou hast found true peace, if thou feelest no sorrow ; nor that then all is well, if thou have no adversary ; nor that all is perfect, if all things be done according to thy desire. Neither do thou then esteem highly of thy self, or account thy self to be specially beloved, if thou be in great devotion and sweetness ; for by these things a true lover of virtue is not known, neither doth the profiting and perfection of a Man consist in these things.

3. *Christian.* Wherein then Lord ?

Christ. In offering thy self with all thy heart unto the will of God, not seeking thine own interest, neither in great nor little, neither for a time nor for ever, so that thou keepest one and the same countenance with thanksgiving, both in prosperity and in adversity, weighing all things with an equal balance. If thou be of such courage and so patient in hope, that when inward comfort is withdrawn from thee, thou preparest thy heart to suffer greater things ; and dost not justify thy self, as though thou oughtest not to suffer these and so great afflictions, but justifiest me in whatsoever

soever I appoint, and praisest my Holy name: Then thou walkest in the true and right way of peace: And thou shalt have undoubted hope to see my face again with great joy. And if thou attain to the full contempt of thy self; then shalt thou enjoy as great abundance of peace, as this thy state of sojourning in this World is capable of.

CHAP. XXVI.

Of the excellency of a free mind, which humble Prayer sooner gaineth than Reading.

Christian. Lord, it is the work of a perfect Man, never to slack his mind from the attentive thought of heavenly things, and as it were to pass without care amongst many cares; not like a dull sluggard; but by the priviledge of a free mind, adhering to no creature with inordinate affection.

2. I beseech thee, my most gracious God, preserve me from the cares of this Life, lest I should be too much entangled thereby: And for the many necessities of
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the body, lest I should be caught by pleasure: And from whatsoever is an obstacle to the Soul, lest broken with troubles I should be overthrown. I say not from those things that worldly vanity so greatly desireth: But from those miseries, that as punishments and as the common curse of mortality, do weigh down and hinder the Soul of thy Servant, that it cannot enter into freedom of Spirit, as often as it would.

3. O my God, the ineffable sweetness, embitter unto me all carnal comfort, which may draw me away from the love of eternal things, and may wickedly allure me to it self by the beholding of some present delightful good. Let me not be overcome, O Lord, let me not be overcome by flesh and blood. Let not the World and the short glory thereof deceive me. Let not the Devil and his subtil fraud supplant me. Give me strength to resist, patience to suffer, and constancy to persevere. Give me instead of all the comforts of the World, the most sweet union of thy Spirit, and in lieu of carnal Love, pour into my Soul the Love of thy name.

4. Be-

4. Behold, Meat, Drink, Cloaths, and other necessities for the maintenance of the body, are burdensome unto a fervent Spirit. Grant me to use such refreshments moderately, and not to be intangled with an over great desire of them. It is not lawful to cast away all things, for that nature is to be sustained: But to desire superfluities, and those things that are rather pleasurable, thy holy Law forbiddeth: For otherwise the flesh would Rebel against the Spirit. Herein, I beseech thee, let thy hand govern me, and teach me, that I may not exceed.

C H A P. XXVII.

That private Love most hindreth from the chiefeſt Good.

C*Hrist.* Son, thou oughtest to give all for all, and to retain nothing of thy self. Know, that the Love of thy self doth hurt thee more than any thing in the World. According to the Love and affection thou bearest them, so doth every thing cleave unto thee more or less. If thy love be pure, simple, and well ordered, thou shalt

thalt be free from the bondage of things. Covet not that which thou mayest not have. Be not willing to have that which may hinder thee and deprive thee of inward liberty. It is strange that thou committest not thy self wholly unto me, from the bottom of thy heart, with all things that thou canst desire or have.

2. Why dost thou consume thy self with vain grief? Why art thou tired with needless cares? stand to my good will, and thou shalt suffer no detriment at all. If thou seekest this or that, and wouldest be here or there, to enjoy thine own commodity and pleasure; thou shalt never be at quiet, nor free from trouble of mind; for in every thing somewhat will be wanting, and in every place there will be some that will cross thee.

3. Not every external thing therefore attained and heaped together helpeth thee, but it rather availeth, if thou despise it, and dost utterly root it out from thy heart; which thou must not understand only of thy revenues and wealth, but of thy seeking after honor also, and thy desire of vain praise, all which do pass away with this world. The place availeth little if the spi-

rit of fervor be wanting; neither shall that peace which is sought abroad long continue, if the state of thy heart be destitute of a true foundation; that is, unless thou stand stedfast in me, thou mayest change, but not better thy self. For when occasion doth happen, thou shalt find not only those things which thou soughtest to fly, but a great deal more.

A Prayer for purging the heart, and obtaining of Heavenly wisdom.

4. *Christian.* Strengthen me, O God, by the grace of thy holy Spirit. Give me to be strengthened in my inward Man, and to empty my heart of all unprofitable care and anguish; not to be drawn away with the sundry desires of any thing either mean or precious, but to look upon all things as passing away, and that my self do also pass away together with them, for nothing is permanent under the Sun, where all things are vanity and vexation of spirit. O how wise is he that so considereth them!

5. Grant me, Lord, Heavenly wisdom, that I may learn above all things to seek
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and find thee, above all things to relish thee, and to love thee, and to think of all other things as they are, according to the disposal of thy wisdom. Grant me prudently to avoid him that flatters me, and to suffer patiently him that contradicts me. For it is a great part of wisdom not to be moved with every blast of words; nor to give ear to an ill flattering *Syren*; for so we shall go on securely in the way which we have begun.

C H A P. XXVIII.

Against the Tongues of Slanderers.

C*Hrist.* Son, take it not grievously if some think evil of thee, and speak that which thou wouldest not willingly hear. Thou oughtest to judg the worst of thy self, and to think no Man weaker than thy self. If thou dost walk spiritually, thou wilt not much esteem of flying words. It is no small wisdom to keep silence in an evil time, and inwardly to run to me, and not to be troubled with the judgment of Men.

2. Let not thy peace be in the Tongues

of Men ; For whether they interpret well or evil , thou art not therefore another Man. Where is true peace, and true glory ? Is it not in me ? And he that coveteth not to please Men, nor feareth to displease them, shall enjoy much peace. From inordinate love and vain fear ariseth all disquietness of heart and distraction of the mind.

C H A P. XXIX.

*How we ought to call upon God, and bleß him
when tribulation draweth near.*

C*hristian.* Blessed (O Lord) be thy name for ever ; since it pleaseth thee that this temptation and tribulation should come upon me. I cannot flie it ; but have need to flie to thee that thou mayest help me, and turn it to my good. Lord I am now afflicted, and it is not well with me. I am much troubled with this present suffering. And now dear Father, what shall I say ? I am caught amidst straits, save me from this hour. Yet therefore came I into this hour, that thou mayest be glorified,
when

when I shall be greatly humbled, and by thee delivered. Let it please thee Lord, to deliver me; for, poor wretch that I am, what can I doe, and whither shall I go without thee? Grant patience Lord, even this time also. Help me my God, and then I will not fear how grievously soever I be afflicted.

2. And now in these my troubles what shall I say? Lord, thy will be done; I have well deserved to be afflicted and grieved. Surely I ought to bear it; and O that I could bear it with patience, until the tempest be passed over, and it become calm! But thy omnipotent hand is able to take even this temptation from me, and to aswage the violence thereof, that I utterly sink not under it, as oftentimes heretofore thou hast done unto me, O my God, my mercy. And how much the more hard it is to me, so much the more easie is this *change of the right hand of the most High.*

C H A P. XXX.

Of craving the divine aid, and confidence of recovering grace.

CHrist. Son, I am the Lord that giveth strength in the day of tribulation. Come unto me when it is not well with thee. This is that which most of all hindereth Heavenly consolation, that thou art slow in turning thy self unto Prayer. For before thou dost earnestly pray unto me, thou seekest in the mean while many comforts, and delightest thy self in outward things. And hence it comes to pass that all doth little profit thee; until thou consider that I am he that delivers those that trust in me, and that out of me there is neither powerful help, nor profitable counsel, nor lasting remedy. But now thou having recovered breath after the tempest; gather strength again in the light of my mercies; for I am at hand, saith the Lord, to repair all, not only entirely, but also abundantly and in a very plentiful measure.

2. Is there any thing hard to me? Or am I like unto him that promiseth and performeth not? Where is thy faith? Be firm and constant. Take courage and be patient; comfort will come to thee in due time. Wait, wait for me, I will come and heal thee. It is a temptation that vexeth thee, and a vain fear that affrighteth thee. What else doth the care for future contingencies bring thee, but sorrow upon sorrow? *Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof.* It is a vain and unprofitable thing to be grieved, or to rejoyce for future things, that perhaps will never come to pass.

3. But it is incident to Man, to be deluded with such imaginations; and a sign of a weak mind to be so easily drawn away by the suggestion of the enemy. For he careth not so he delude and deceive thee, whether it be true or false which he proposeth; whether he overthrow thee with the love of present, or the fear of future things. Let not therefore thy heart be troubled, neither let it fear. Believe in me, and put thy trust in my mercy. When thou thinkest thy self furthest off from me, oftentimes I am nearest unto thee. When thou judgest that almost all is lost, then oftentimes

the greatest advantage of gaining is at hand. All is not lost when any thing falleth out contrary. Thou must not judg according to that which thou feelest for the present; nor so take, or give thy self over to any grief, from whence soever it cometh, as though all hope of delivery were quite gone.

4. Think not thy self wholly left, although for a time I have sent thee some tribulation, or withdrawn thy desired comfort; for this is the way to the Kingdom of Heaven. And without doubt it is more expedient for thee and the rest of my Servants, that ye be exercised with adversities, than that ye should have all things according to your desires. I know the secret thoughts of thy heart, and that it is very expedient for thy welfare, that thou be left sometimes without taste of *spiritual sweetnesss, and in a dry condition* lest perhaps thou shouldest be puffed up with thy prosperous estate, and shouldest please thy self in that which thou art not. That which I have given I can take away; and restore it again when I please.

5. When I give it, it is mine, when I withdraw it, I take not any thing that is thine;

thine; for mine is every good and every perfect gift. If I send thee affliction, or any Crops whatsoever, repine not, nor let thy heart fail thee; I can quickly succor thee; and turn all thy heaviness into joy. Nevertheless I am righteous, and greatly to be praised when I deal thus with thee.

6. If thou be wise, and considerest this rightly, thou wilt never mourn so dejectedly for any adversity that befall thee, but rather rejoyce and give thanks, yea, account this thy only joy that afflicting thee with sorrows, I do not spare thee. *As my Father hath loved me, I also love you*, said I unto my beloved Disciples; whom certainly I sent not out to temporal joys, but to great conflicts; not to honors, but to contempts; not to idleness, but to labors; not to rest, but to bring forth much fruit with patience. My Son, remember these words.

C H A P. XXXI.

*Of the contempt of all creatures, to find out
the Creator.*

C*hristian.* Lord, I stand in need of yet greater grace, that I may reach to that pitch, as that nor Man nor any creature may be a let unto me. For as long as any thing detains me, I cannot freely take my flight unto thee. He desired to fly freely that said, *who will give me wings like a Dove, and I will fly and be at rest? What thing more quiet than the single eye? And what more free, than he that desireth nothing upon Earth?* Man ought therefore to pass over all creatures, and perfectly to forsake himself, and to remain in excels of mind, and to see that thou the Creator of all things, hast nothing amongst creatures like unto thee. And unless a Man be freed from *the affection* of all creatures, he cannot with freedom of mind attend unto divine things. And for this cause there are so few contemplative Men to be found, for that few can wholly withdraw themselves from things created and perishing.

2. But

2. But to do this there is need of much grace which may raise up the soul, and enravish it above it self. And unless a Man be raised up in spirit, and freed from all creatures, and wholly united unto God; whatsoever he knoweth, and whatsoever he hath, is of little account. A long while shall he be little, and lie grovelling below, that esteemeth any thing great, but the one only infinite and eternal Good. For whatsoever is not God, is nothing, and ought to be accounted as nothing. There is great difference between the wisdom of an illuminated and religious Man, and the knowledg of a learned and studious Clerk. For more noble is that learning which floweth from above from the divine influence, than that which is painfully gotten by the wit of Man.

3. There are many that desire contemplation, but they endeavor not to practise those things that are required thereunto. Another great let is this, that we rest in signs and sensible things, and take little care about the perfect mortification of our selves. I know not what it is, nor by what spirit we are led, nor what we pretend, we that seem to be called spiritual,
that

that we take so much pains and so great care for transitory and low things, and scarce or seldom think of our own inward concernments, with the full recollection of our minds.

4. Alas, presently after a slight recollection, we break out again, and weigh not our words with diligent examination. We mind not where our affections lie; nor bewail the impurity that is in all our actions. For all flesh had corrupted his way, and therefore did that general flood ensue. Sith our inward affection then is much corrupted, it must needs be that our actions proceeding thence be corrupted, as a sign of the want of inward vigor. From a pure heart proceedeth the fruit of a good life.

5. We ask how much one hath done; but how virtuously or vigorously it was done, is not so diligently considered. We inquire whether he be strong, rich, beautiful, handsome, a good writer, a good singer, or a good laborer, but how poor he is in spirit, how patient and meek, how religious and spiritual, is seldom spoken of. Nature respecteth the outward things of Man, Grace turneth it self to the inward.

That

That is often deceived; This hath her trust in God, to the end she be not deceived.

CHAP. XXXII.

Of denial of our selves, and forsaking all inordinate desires.

CHrist. Son, thou canst not possess perfect liberty, unless thou wholly deny thy self. All such are fettered and in bondage as seek their proper interest wholly, and are lovers of themselves, covetous, curious, wanderers, always seeking pleasure, and not the things of Jesus Christ; but oftentimes devising and framing that which will not continue; for all that is not of God shall perish: Keep this short and compleat saying: *Forsake all, and thou shalt find all. Leave thy inordinate desires, and thou shalt find rest.* Consider this well; and when thou hast fulfilled it, thou shalt understand all.

2. *Christian.* Lord, this is not one days work, nor Childrens sport; yea, in this short

short word all the perfection of religious persons is included.

Christ. Son, thou must not go back, nor straightways be dejected, when thou hearest of the way of the perfect; but rather be stirred up to higher things, or at least in desire sigh after them. I would it were so well with thee, and thou wert come up to this pitch, that thou wert no longer a lover of thy self, but didst stand meerly at my beck, and at his whom I have appointed a Father over thee; then thou shouldst exceedingly please me, and all thy life would pass away in joy and peace. Thou hast yet many things to forsake, which unless thou wholly resign up unto me, thou shalt not attain to that which thou desirest. *I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest become rich, that is Heavenly wisdom, which treadeth under foot all base and earthly things. Set little by earthly wisdom, and care not fondly to please others or thy self.*

3. I said, that the mean things must be bought with precious things and such as were with Men of great esteem. For the true Heavenly wisdom seemeth mean and of small account, and is scarce thought of by

by Men; for that esteemeth not highly of it self, nor seeketh to be magnified upon Earth; many praise it from the teeth outward, but in their life they are far from it; yet is it the precious Pearl which is hidden from many.

C H A P. XXXIII.

Of inconstancy of heart, and of directing our final intentions unto God.

Chrift. Son, trust not to thy present affection, for it will quickly be changed into another thing. As long as thou livest, thou art subject to mutability, even against thy will; so that now thou art merry, now sad; now quiet, now troubled; now devout, now undevout; now diligent, now slow; now grave, now light. But he that is wise and well instructed in the spirit, standeth fast upon these mutable things; not heeding what he feelth in himself, or which way the wind of instability bloweth; but that the whole intention of his mind may tend to the right and best end. For thus he may
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continue one, and the self same, and unshaken in the midst of so many various events, directing continually the single eye of his intention unto me.

2. And how much purer the eye of the intention is, with so much the more constancy doth he pass through the several kinds of storms. But in many things the eye of a pure intention waxeth dim sighted, for it quickly looketh upon some delightful object that it meeteth withal ; And it is rare to find one that is wholly free from all blemish of self-seeking. So the Jews in times past came into Bethany to *Martha* and *Mary*, not for Jesus alone, but to see *Lazarus* also. The eye of our intention therefore is to be purged; that it may be single and right, and to be directed unto me, beyond the manifold diversity of all mediums. and whatsoever earthly objects come between.

C H A P. XXXIV.

That God is sweet, above all things, and in all things, to him that loveth.

CHristian. Behold, my God, and all things. What would I have more, and what more happy thing can I desire? O sweet and savory word! but to him that loveth the Word, not the world nor those things that are in the world, *My God, and all things.* Enough is said to him, that understandeth; and to him that loveth it is pleasant to repeat it often. For when thou art present, all things do yield delight; but when thou art absent, every thing becomes irksome. Thou givest quiet of heart and much peace, and pleasant joy. Thou makest us think well of all things, and praise thee in all things; neither can any thing please long without thee; but if it be pleasant and grateful, thy grace must be present, and it must be seasoned with the sweetness of thy wisdom.

2. What is not savory unto him to whom thou art pleasing? And whom thou delightest not, what can be pleasant to him?

O

But

But the wise of this world, and they that relish the things of the flesh, come short of thy wisdom ; for in the world is much vanity, and in the flesh is death. But they that follow thee by the contempt of worldly things, and mortification of the flesh, are proved to be truly wise ; For they are changed from vanity to truth, from the flesh to the spirit. These relish God ; and what good soever is found in creatures, they wholly refer unto the praise of their Maker. Notwithstanding great yea very great is the difference between the sweetness of the creator and of the creature, of eternity and of time, of light uncreated and of light enlightned.

3. O thou everlasting light, surpassing all created lights, dart the beams of thy brightness from above, which may pierce all the most inward parts of my heart ; purifie, rejoyce, enlighten and enliven my spirit, with all the powers thereof, that I may cleave unto thee with abundance of joy and triumph. O when will that blessed and desired hour come, that I may be filled with thy presence, and thou mayest be unto me all in all ! As long as this is not granted me, I shall not have full joy. Alas !
the

the old Man yet liveth in me, he is not wholly crucified, he is not perfectly dead. He doth as yet lust strongly against the spirit, and stirreth up inward wars, and suffereth not the Kingdom of my soul to be in peace.

4. But thou that rulest the power of the Sea, and stillest the rising of the Waves thereof, arise and help me; scatter the People that desire war, destroy them in thy might, display thy greatness, and let thy right hand be glorified, for there is no hope nor refuge for me, but in thee my Lord God.

C H A P. XXV

That there is no security from temptation in this life.

C*Hrist.* Son, there is no security in this life; as long as thou livest, thou shalt always have need of spiritual armor. Thou livest among enemies, and art assaulted on the right hand and on the left. If therefore thou defendest not thy self on every side with the shield of patience, thou

canst not be long unwounded. Moreover, if thou fix not thy heart on me with a sincere will to suffer all things for me, thou canst not bear the heat of this battel, nor obtain the triumphant reward of the Saints in bliss. Thou oughtest therefore manfully to go through all, and to use a strong hand against whatsoever withstandeth thee. For to him that overcometh is manna given; but for the negligent there remains much misery.

2. If thou seekest rest in this world, how wilt thou then attain to everlasting rest? Dispose not thy self to much ease, but to much patience. Seek true peace, not in Earth, but in Heaven; not in Men nor in any other creature, but in God alone. Thou oughtest for the love of God willingly to undergo all things, even labors, griefs, temptations, vexations, anxieties, necessities, infirmities, injuries, detractions, reprehensions, humblings, shame, corrections, and contempts; these help to virtue: these try a Novice of Christ; these make the Heavenly Crown. I will give an everlasting reward for a short labor, and infinite glory for transitory shame.

3. Thinkest thou that thou shalt always have

have spiritual consolations at will? My Saints had not so, but they had many afflictions, and sundry temptations, and many discomforts; in all which they did bear up themselves patiently, and trusted rather in God than in themselves, knowing that the sufferings of this time are not con-dign to the deserving of future glory. Wilt thou have that straightways, which many after many tears and great labors have hardly obtained? Wait upon the Lord, do manfully, be of good courage; do not despair, do not fly, but with constancy expose both body and soul for the glory of God. I will reward thee in most plentiful manner, and I will be with thee in all thy tribulations.

C H A P. XXXVI.

Against the vain judgments of Men.

Chrift. Son, cast thy heart constantly upon God, and fear not the judgment of Men, when thy conscience giveth testimony of thy piety and innocency. It is a good and happy thing to suffer in such

a way ; neither will it be burdensome to an humble heart, nor to him that trusteth rather in God than in himself. The most part of Men are given to talk much, and therefore little heed is to be given them ; neither is it possible to satisfie all. Although *Paul* endeavored to please all in the Lord, and made himself all things unto all, yet with him it was a very small thing that he should be judged of Mans judgment.

2. He did for the edification and salvation of others as much as he could, and lay in him ; yet could he not hinder but that he was sometimes judged and despised by others. Therefore he committed all to God, who knew all, and he defended himself with patience and humility against evil tongues ; and such as thought vanities and lies, and spake what they listed : Yet sometimes notwithstanding he answered, lest the weak should be offended by his silence.

3. Who art thou that fearest a mortal Man ? To day he is, and to morrow he is not seen. Fear God, and thou shalt not need to fear the terrors of Men. What harm can the words or injuries of any do thee ? He rather hurteth himself than thee ;
neither

neither can he avoid the judgment of God, whosoever he be. Have thou God before thine eyes, and contend not with complaining words. And if for the present thou seemest to be worsted, and to suffer shame without desert; do not therefore repine, neither do thou lessen thy crown by thy impatience; but rather lift up thy eyes to me in Heaven, who am able to deliver thee from all shame and wrong, and to render to every one according to their works.

C H A P. XXXVII.

*Of a full and pure resignation of our selves,
for the obtaining freedom of heart.*

C*Hrist.* Son, forsake thy self, and thou shalt find me. Make no self respecting choice of any thing, appropriate nothing to thy self, and thou shalt ever be a gainer. For greater grace shall be given thee, when thou dost perfectly resign thy self, and not turn back to take thy self again.

Christian. Lord, how often shall I resign
O 4 sign

sign my self; and wherein shall I forsake my self?

Christ. Always, and every hour, as well in little things as in great. I do except nothing, but do require that thou be naked and void of all things. Otherwise how canst thou be mine, and I thine, unless both within and without thou be free from all self will? And how much the sooner thou dost this, so much the better it will be with thee; and how much the more fully and sincerely thou doest it, so much the more shalt thou please me, and so much the more shalt thou gain.

2. Some there are that resign themselves, but with some exception; for they put not their whole trust in God, and therefore they study how to provide for themselves. Some also at the first do offer all, but afterwards being assailed with temptations, do return again to that which they had left, and therefore they go not forward in the way of virtue. These shall not attain to the true liberty of the pure heart, nor to the favor of my sweetest familiarity, unless they first make an entire resignation and a daily oblation of themselves unto me. For without this there neither

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is nor can be the fruitive union with me.

3. I have often said unto thee, and now again I say the same, Forsake thy self, resign thy self, and thou shalt enjoy much inward peace. Give all for all; seek nothing, require back nothing, abide purely and with a firm confidence in me, and thou shalt enjoy me; thou shalt be free in heart, and darkness shall not have power over thee. Let this be thy whole endeavor, let this be thy Prayer, let this be thy desire; that being stript of all selfness, thou mayest even nakedly follow naked Jesus, and dying to thy self, mayest live eternally to me. Then shall all vain imaginations, evil perturbations, and superfluous cares fly away! then shall immoderate fear leave thee, and inordinate love shall die.

C H A P. XXXVIII.

*Of good government in outward things, and of
recourse to God in dangers.*

C*hrist.* Son, thou oughtest with all diligence to procure, that in every place and action or external business, thou be inwardly free and Master of thy self, and that all things be under thee, and thou not under them; that thou mayest be Lord and Master of thy actions; not a servant or a hireling, but rather a Free-man and a true Hebrew, passing into the lot and freedom of the Sons of God, who standing upon the things that are present, view the things which are eternal; who look on transitory things with the left eye, and with the right do behold the things of Heaven; whom temporal things cannot draw to cleave unto them, but they rather draw temporal things to serve them, and to be disposed by them in such a way as they are ordained by God, and appointed by the Creator of all, who hath left nothing in his creatures without due order.

2. If thou remain stedfast in all events,
and

and dost not weigh by the outward appearance, nor with a carnal eye, the things which thou seest and hearest; but presently in every affair dost enter with *Moses* into the Tabernacle to ask counsel of the Lord; thou shalt sometimes hear the divine Oracle, and shalt return instructed concerning many things both present and to come. For *Moses* had always recourse to the Tabernacle for the deciding of doubts and controversies, and fled to the help of Prayer, for a defence against the iniquity and dangers of Men. So oughtest thou in like manner to fly to the closet of thy heart, earnestly craving the Divine favor. For the Scripture testifieth, that therefore was *Joshuah* and the Children of *Israel* deceived by the Gibeonites, because they asked not counsel at the Mouth of the Lord, but giving too lightly credit to their fair words, were deluded with their counterfeit piety.

C H A P. XXXIX.

That a Man be not over-earnest in his affairs.

Christ. Son, always commit thy cause to me, I will dispose well of it in due time; wait for my ordering of it, and thou shalt find it will be for thy good.

Christian. Lord, I do most willingly commit all unto thee, for my care can avail little. O that I cleaved not too much to future events, but offered my self with all readiness of mind to thy good pleasure!

2. *Christ,* Son, oftentimes a Man doth earnestly labor for that which he desireth, and when he hath gotten it, he beginneth to be of another mind; for Mans affections do not long continue fixed on one thing, but do pass from one to another. It is therefore no small thing for a Man to forsake himself even in the smallest things.

3. The true spiritual profiting of a Man consisteth in the denying of himself; and he that is thus resigned, liveth in great freedom and security. But the old enemy, who always sets himself against all that are good,

good, ceaseth at no time from tempting, but day and night lieth grievously in wait, to cast the unwary, if he can, into the snare of deceit. *Therefore Watch and Pray, saith our Lord, that ye enter not into temptation.*

C H A P. XL.

That Man hath no good of himself nor any thing whereof he can glory.

C*Hristian.* Lord, what is Man that thou art mindful of him, or the Son of Man, that thou visitest him! What hath Man deserved that thou shouldest favor him? Lord, what cause have I to complain, if thou forsake me? Or if thou doest not that which I desire, what can I justly say against it? Surely, this I may truly think and say, Lord, I am nothing, I can do nothing, I have nothing that is good of myself; but in all things I am defective, and do ever tend to nothing; and unless thou help me, and dost inwardly instruct me, I become altogether cold, and am dissolved.

2. But

2. But thou, O Lord, art always the same, and endurest for ever ; always good, just, and holy, doing all things well, justly and holily, and disposing all things with wisdom. But I that am more ready to go backward than forward, do not ever continue in one estate, for Seven times are passed over me ; yet doth it soon turn to the better, when it so pleaseth thee, and when thou vouchsafest to stretch forth thy helping hand. For thou alone canst help me without the aid of Man, and so strengthen me, that my countenance shall be no more changed, but my heart shall be turned to thee alone, and there shall rest.

3. Wherefore if I could once perfectly forsake all humane comfort, either for the attaining of devotion, or for mine own necessity, which inforceth me to seek after thee, (for none else can comfort me) then might I well hope in thy grace, and rejoyce for the gift of new consolation.

4. Thanks be unto thee, from whence all proceedeth, as often as it goeth well with me ; but I am mere vanity and nothing in thy sight, and unconstant and weak Man. Whereof then can I glory ? Or for what do I desire to be esteemed of ?

it not even for nothing? But this is most vain. Truly vain glory is an evil plague and a very great vanity; because it draweth Man from true glory, and robbeth him of Heavenly grace. For whilest a Man pleaseth himself, he displeaseth thee; whilst he gapeth after the praise of Men, he is deprived of true virtues.

5. But the true glory and holy rejoycing is for a Man to glory in thee, and not in himself; to rejoyce in thy Name, and not in his own virtue *or strength*, nor to delight in any creature, but for thee. Praised be thy Name, not mine; magnified be thy work, not mine. Let thy holy Name be blessed, but to me let no part of Mens praises be given. Thou art my glory, thou art the joy of my heart. In thee will I glory and rejoyce all the day; but as for my self I will not glory, but in my infirmities.

6. Let the *Jews* seek honor one of another; I will desire this which is from God alone. For all humane glory, all temporal honor, all worldly highness, compared to thy eternal glory, is vanity and folly. O my Truth, my mercy, my God, most blessed Trinity, to thee alone be
praise,

praise, honor, power and glory for evermore.

CHAP. XLI.

Of the contempt of all temporal honors.

C*Hrist.* Son, trouble not thy self, if thou seest others honored and advanced, and thy self contemned and debased. Lift up thy heart unto me in Heaven, and the contempt of Men on Earth will not grieve thee.

Christian. Lord, we are blind, and quickly seduced with vanity. If I look well into my self, I cannot say that any creature hath done me wrong; and therefore I cannot justly complain of thee.

2. But because I have often and grievously sinned against thee, all creatures do justly take arms against me; for shame and contempt is due unto me, but unto thee praise, honor and glory. And unless I frame my self with a very good will to be despised and forsaken of all creatures, and to be esteemed nothing at all; I cannot obtain inward peace and strength nor be
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spiritually enlightned, nor fully united unto thee.

C H A P. XLII.

That our peace is not to be placed in Men.

C*Hrist.* Son, if the peace thou hast with any be grounded upon the opinion which thou hast of him, or upon the account of thine acquaintance with him, thou shalt ever be in an unconstant and enthralled condition; but if thou have recourse unto the everliving and eternal Truth, a friend going from thee or dying shall not grieve thee. The love of thy friend ought to be grounded in me; and for me is he to be beloved, whosoever he be whom thou thinkest well of, and is very dear unto thee in this life. No friendship can avail, or continue without me; neither is that love true and pure, which is not knit by me. Thou oughtest to be so dead to such affections of beloved friends, that (forasmuch as appertaineth unto thee) thou shouldest wish to be without all company of Men. Man approacheth so much the
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nearer unto God, by how much the further off he departeth from all Earthly comfort; so much the higher also he ascendeth unto God by how much lower he descendeth into himself, and how much the meaner he is in his own sight.

2. But he that attributeth any good unto himself, hindereth the coming of Gods grace unto him; for the grace of the holy Ghost ever seeketh an humble heart. If thou couldest perfectly annihilate thy self, and empty thy self of all created love; then should I flow into thee with great abundance of grace. When thou castest thy eyes on creatures, the sight of thy Creator is taken from thee. Learn to overcome thy self in all things, for the love of thy Creator; and then shalt thou be able to attain to divine knowledge. How little soever the thing be, if it be inordinately loved and regarded; it defileth the soul, and hindereth the enjoying of the chiefest good.

C H A P. XLIII.

Against vain and secular knowledg.

Chrift. Son, let not the fair speeches and subtile sayings of Men move thee. For *the Kingdom of God consisteth not in word, but in power.* Observe well my words; for they enflame hearts, and enlighten minds, they cause compunction, and bring sundry comforts. Do thou never read to shew thy self learned or wise; but labor to mortify thy sins; for that will profit thee more than the knowledg of many difficult questions.

2. When thou shalt have read and known many things; thou oughtest ever to return to one beginning and Principle. I am he, that teacheth Man knowledg, and give unto babes a more clear understanding, than can be taught by Man. He therefore, to whom I speak, shall quickly be wise, and shall profit much in the spirit. Wo be to them that enquire many curious things of Men, and do little mind the way how to serve me. The time will come, when the Master of Masters shall appear, Christ the Lord of Angels, to

hear the lessons of all, that is, to examine the consciences of every one; and then he will search Jerusalem with a candle, and the hidden things of darkness shall be laid open, and the arguings of Mens Tongues shall be silent.

3. I am he that in an instant do raise up the humble mind to understand more of the eternal truth, than can be gotten by Ten years study in the Schools: I teach without the noise of words, without the confounding of opinions, without ambition of honor, without the scuffling of arguments. I am he that teacheth to despise Earthly things, to loath things present, to seek the everlasting, to relish the things that are eternal, to flee honors, to suffer injuries, to place all hope in me, to desire nothing out of me, and above all things ardently to love me.

4. For a certain person by loving me entirely, learned divine things, and spake that which was admirable; he profited more by forsaking all things, than in studying subtilties. To some I speak common things, to others more special things; to some I appear sweetly by signs and figures, but to some I reveal mysteries with much light.

light. The voice of books is indeed one, but it teacheth not all Men alike. For I am the inward teacher, I am the Truth, I am the searcher of the heart, the discerners of the thoughts, the setter forwards of what is good, distributing to every one as I judge meet.

C H A P. XLIV.

Of not drawing outward things to our selves.

C*Hrist.* Son, in many things thou oughtest to be ignorant, and esteem thy self as dead upon Earth, and as one to whom the whole world is crucified. Thou must also pass by many things with a deaf ear, and rather think of that which appertaineth to thy peace. It is better for thee to turn thine eyes from what doth mislike thee, and to leave unto every one his own opinion, than to strive with contentious words. If all stand well betwixt thee and God, and if thou hast his judgment in thy mind, thou shalt the more easily bear if thou be overcome.

2. *Christian.* O Lord, to what a pass

are we come ! Behold, we bewail a temporal loss, for a little gain we toil and run ; and the spiritual damage of our soul is forgotten, and hardly at length called to mind. That which little or nothing profiteth, is minded ; and that which is chiefly necessary, is slightly passed over, because the whole Man doth slide down into eternal things ; and unless he speedily repent, he lieth immerst in them, and that willingly.

C H A P. XLV.

That credit is not to be given to all Men : and how prone Man is to offend in words.

C*hristian.* Help me, O Lord, in my tribulation, for vain is the help of Man. How often have I been deceived, finding want of faith where I thought it sure ? And how often have I found faith where I least expected it ? It is vain therefore to trust in Men ; but the salvation of the just, O Lord, is in thee. Blessed be thou my Lord God, in all things that befall us.

us. We are weak and inconstant, quickly deceived, and soon changed.

2. Who is he, that in all things so warily and circumspectly keeps himself, that he never falls into any deceit or perplexity? But he that trusteth in thee, O Lord, and seeketh thee with a single heart, doth not so easily fail; and if he fall into any tribulation, be he never so much enthralled, yet he shall quickly be either delivered or comforted by thee. For thou wilt not forsake him for ever that trusteth in thee. A friend is rare to be found, that continueth faithful in all his friends distress; but thou, O Lord, thou alone art most faithful at all times, and there is none like unto thee.

3. O how wise was that holy soul that said, My mind is firmly settled and grounded in Christ! If it were so with me, then would not humane fear so easily trouble me, nor the darts of words move me. Who can foresee all things? Who is able to beware before-hand of future evils? If things even foreseen do oftentimes hurt us, how can things unlooked for choose but wound us grievously? But why did I not provide better for my self, miserable

Wretch? Why also have I so easily given credit to others? But we are Men, nothing but frail Men, although by many we are reputed and called Angels. To whom shall I give credit, Lord? to whom but to thee? Thou art the Truth that neither dost deceive, nor can be deceived. And on the other side, Every Man is a liar, weak, unconstant, and subject to fall, especially in words; and therefore we must not easily give credit even to that, which in outward shew seemeth at the first to be right.

4. O with what wisdom hast thou warned us to beware of Men! And because a Mans foes are they of his own household, not to give credit, if one should say, *Lo here*, or *Lo there*. I am taught to my cost, and O that I might thereby encrease my care, and not my folly. Be wary saith one, be wary, keep to thy self what I tell thee; and whilst I hold my peace, and think it is secret, he cannot keep that secret which he desired should be secret, but presently discloseth me and himself, and goeth his way. From such tales and such indiscreet persons protect me, O Lord, that I fall not into their hands, nor ever commit such things. Give me to observe truth
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and constancy in my words, and remove far from me a deceitful Tongue. What I am not willing to suffer, I ought by all means to avoid.

5. O how good is it and tending to peace, to be silent of others, nor to believe promiscuously all that is said, nor easily to report what we have heard; to lay ones self open to few; always to seek after thee who art the beholder of the heart; not to be carried about with every wind of words, but to desire that all things both within and without, be accomplished according to the pleasure of thy will. How safe is it for the keeping of Heavenly grace, to fly the sight of Men, and not to seek those things that seem to cause admiration abroad, but to follow that with all diligence, which bringeth amendment of life and zeal of godliness.

6. To how many hath virtue known and over hastily commended, been hurtful? How profitable hath grace been kept with silence in this mortal life, which is nothing but a temptation and a warfare?

C H A P. XLVI.

*Of putting our trust in God when evil words
arise.*

C*Hrist.* Son, be constant, and put thy trust in me. For what are words but words? They fly through the Air, but hurt not so much as a stone. If thou be guilty, see that thou be not unwilling to amend thy self; if thou be innocent, resolve to suffer this willingly for the sake of God. It is but a small matter to suffer sometimes a few words, if thou hast not yet the courage to endure hard stripes. And why do small matters go to thy heart, but for that thou art yet carnal, and regardest Men more than thou oughtest? Because thou art afraid to be despised, therefore thou wilt not be reprehended for thy faults, but seekest the shades of excuses.

2. But look better into thy self, and thou shalt see that the world is yet alive in thee, and a vain affection to please Men. For when thou shunnest to be humbled and reproved for thy faults, it is evident that
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thou art neither truly humble, nor truly dead to the world, nor the world crucified to thee. But give diligent ear to my words, and thou shalt little regard Ten thousand words spoken by Men. Behold, if all should be spoken against thee that could be most maliciously invented, what would it hurt thee, if thou sufferedst it to pass and madest no more reckoning of it than of a mote? could all those words pluck as much as one hair from thy head?

3. But he that hath no heart in him, nor hath God before his eyes, is easily moved with a word of dispraise; when as he that trusteth in me, and affects not to confide in his own judgment, shall be free from humane fears. For I am the Judge and the discerners of all secrets: I know how the matter passed; I know him that offereth the injury, and him that suffereth it. From me hath this proceeded; this hath happened by my permission, that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed. I shall judge the guilty, and the innocent; but by a secret judgement I would before hand try them both.

4. The Testimony of Men oftentimes deceiveth; but my judgement is true, it shall

shall stand and not be overthrowne. It is commonly hidden, and not known in every thing, but to few notwithstanding it never erreth, neither can it erre, although to the eyes of the foolish it seems not right. Men ought therefore to have recourse to me in every judgment, and not to leave to their own opinions. For the just Man will not be troubled, whatsoever befallerh him from God ; and if any thing be wrongfully brought forth against him, he will not much care ; neither will he vainly be glad, if by others he be with reason excused. For he considereth that I am he that searcheth the heart and reins, and do judge not according to the outward face, nor humane appearance. For that is oftentimes found culpable in my sight, that in the Judgment of Men is thought to be commendable.

5. *Christian.* O Lord God, the just judg, strong and patient, thou who knowest the frailty and pravity of Man, be thou my strength, and all my trust, for mine own conscience sufficeth me not. Thou knowest that which I know not, and therefore in every reproof I ought to have humbled my self, and to have borne meekly ;
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vouchsafe mercifully to pardon me, as often as I have failed herein, and give me again grace of greater sufferance. For thy abundant mercy is more available to me for the obtaining of pardon, than my conceived justice for the defence of my hidden conscience. Although I know nothing by my self, yet I cannot hereby justify my self; for without thy mercy no Man living shall be justified in thy sight.

C H A P. XLVII.

*That all grievous things are to be endured for
life everlasting.*

C*Hrist.* Son, be not dismaied with the painful labors which thou hast undertaken for me, neither be thou wholly discomforted for the tribulations which do befall thee; but let my promise strengthen and comfort thee in all events. I am able to reward thee infinitely and above all measure. Thou shalt not long toil here, nor always be pressed with griefs. Wait a while and thou shalt see a speedy end of thy evils. There will come an hour when all
labor

labor and trouble shall cease. Little and short is all that which passeth away with time.

2. Do what thou dost ; labor faithfully in my Vineyard , I will be thy reward. Write, read, sing, mourn, keep silence, pray, suffer crosses manfully ; life everlasting is worthy of all these yea and greater combats. Peace shall come in the day which is known unto the Lord, and there shall be neither day nor night, to wit, of this time, but everlasting light, infinite brightness, stedfast peace, and secure rest. Then thou shalt not say, *who shall deliver me from the body of this death ?* Nor cry, *wo is me, that my sojourning is prolonged !* For death shall be thrown down, and salvation shall appear which never shall have end, there shall be no anxiety ; but blessed joy, sweet and lovely company.

3. O, if thou hadst seen the everlasting Crowns of the Saints in Heaven, and with how great glory they now rejoyce who in times past were contemptible to this world, and esteemed unworthy of life it self ; truly thou wouldest presently humble thy self even unto the Earth ; and wouldest rather seek to be under the feet of all, than to have command

command so much as over one; neither wouldest thou desire the pleasant days of this life, but rather rejoyce to suffer affliction for God, and esteem it thy greatest gain to be reputed as nothing amongst Men.

4. O if thou hadst a relishing of these things, and didst suffer them to sink into the bottom of thy heart, how durst thou so much as once to complain? Are not all painful labors to be endured for everlasting life? It is no small matter, to lose or to gain the Kingdom of Heaven. Lift up thy face therefore unto Heaven; behold I, and all my Saints with me, who in this world had great conflicts, do now rejoyce, now are comforted, now are secure, now are at rest, and shall remain with me everlastingly in the Kingdom of my Father.

C H A P. XLVIII.

Of the everlasting day, and shortness of this life.

C*hristian.* O most blessed mansion of the Heavenly City! O most clear day of Eternity, which night obscureth not, but the highest Truth ever enlightneth; a day of continual joy, of perpetual quietness, and never changing into a contrary state! O that that day would once appear, and all these temporal things were at an end! To the Saints it shineth glistering with everlasting brightness, but to those that are Pilgrims upon Earth, it appeareth only afar off, and as it were through a glass.

2. The Citizens of Heaven do know how joyful that day is; but the banished Children of Eve bewail the bitterness and tediousness of this. The daies of this life are short and evil, full of sorrow and anguish; where Man is defiled with many sins, incumbred with many passions, disquieted with many fears, filled with many cares, distracted with many curiosities, intangled

tangled with many vanities, compassed about with many errors, worn away with many labors, vexed with temptations, weakned with pleasures; tormented with want.

3. O, when shall these evils be at an end! when shall I be delivered from the miserable bondage of sin! When shall I think, O Lord, of thee alone! When shall I fully rejoyce in thee! When shall I enjoy true liberty without all impediments whatsoever, without all trouble of mind and body! When shall I have solid peace, secure and undisturbed peace, peace within and without, peace every way assured! O good Jesus when shall I stand to behold thee! When shall I contemplate the glory of thy Kingdom! When wilt thou be unto me All in all! O when shall I be with thee in thy Kingdom, which thou hast prepared for thy beloved from all eternity! I am left a poor and banished Man in the land of mine enemies, where there are daily wars and great calamities.

4. Comfort my banishment, assuage my sorrow; for my whole desire fighteth after thee. For all is burdensome to me whatsoever this world offereth for my com-

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fort. I long to enjoy thee most inwardly, but I cannot attain unto it. My desire is, that I may be wholly given up to Heavenly things, but temporal things and unmortified passions weigh me down. With the mind I would be above all things, but with the flesh I am inforced to be subject against my will. Thus unhappy Man that I am, I fight against my self, and am become grievous to my self, whilst my spirit seeketh to be above, and my flesh to be below.

5. O what do I inwardly suffer, when in my mind I consider Heavenly things, and presently in my prayers a multitude of carnal imaginations present themselves before me! My God, be not far from me, depart not in thy wrath from thy Servant. Cast forth thy lightning, and disperse them; send out thy darts, and break all the imaginations which my enemy casts in. Gather in, call home my senses unto thee, make me forget all the things of this world: grant me to cast away speedily the imaginations of wickedness. Succor me, O thou the everlasting Truth, that no vanity may move me. Come Heavenly sweetness and let all impurity fly from before thee. Pardon

don me also, and mercifully forgive me as often as I think upon any thing else besides thee in prayer. I do truly confess, that I am wont to be subject to many distractions; for oftentimes I am not there, where I do corporally stand, or sit, but I am rather there, whither my thoughts do carry me. Where my thought is, there am I: there is oftentimes my thought, where my affection is. That quickly offereth it self unto me, which is naturally delightfom, or by custom is pleasing.

6. And for this cause, thou that art Truth it self hast plainly said. *where thy treasure is, there is also thy heart.* If I love Heaven, I willingly think of Heavenly things. If I love the world, I rejoyce at the felicity of the world, and grieve for the adversity thereof. If I love the flesh, I shall fancy oftentimes those things that are pleasing to the flesh; If I love the spirit, I delight to think of spiritual things. For whatsoever I love, thereof do I willingly speak, and hear, and carry home with me the forms, *the Ideas and representations* thereof. But blessed is that Man, that for thee, O Lord, dismisseth all creatures, that violently resisteth nature, and through fervor

of spirit crucifieth the lusts of the flesh, that so with a serene conscience he may offer pure prayer unto thee, and be meet to be admitted into the Angelical quire, all earthly things both outwardly and inwardly being excluded.

C H A P. XLIX.

Of the desire of everlasting life, and how great rewards are promised to those that fight valiantly.

C*Hrist.* Son, when thou perceivest the desire of everlasting bliss to be given thee from above, and desirest to depart out of the Tabernacle of this body, that thou mayest behold my brightness without shadow of turning; open thy heart wide, and receive this holy inspiration with thy whole desire. Give greatest thanks to the Heavenly goodness, that dealeth with thee so favorably, visiteth thee mercifully, stirreth thee up fervently, holdeth thee up powerfully, lest through thine own weight thou fall down to the things of Earth. Neither dost thou obtain this by thy own thought

thought or endeavor, but by the mere dignation of Heavenly grace and divine favor; to the end that thou mayest make a further progress in holiness, and obtain greater humility, and prepare thy self for future battels, and endeavor to cleave unto me with the whole affection of thy heart, and serve me with a fervent desire.

2. Son, the fire burneth many times, but the flame ascendeth not up without smoak; so likewise the desires of some Men burn towards Heavenly things, and yet they are not free from temptation of carnal affection; and therefore it is not altogether purely for the honor of God that which they so exactly request of him. Such is also oftentimes thy desire, which thou hast pretended to be so serious. For that is not pure and perfect, which is tinged with the love of thine own proper commodity and interest.

3. Ask not that which is delightful and profitable to thee, but that which is acceptable to me, and appertaineth to my honor; for if thou judgest aright, thou oughtest to prefer and follow my appointment, rather than thine own desire, or any desired thing. I know thy desire, and have heard

thy frequent groans. Now thou wouldest enjoy the glorious liberty of the Sons of God; now doth the everlasting habitation, and the Heavenly Country replenished with all joy, delight thee; but that hour is not yet come; as yet there is another time; to wit, a time of war, a time of labor and trial. Thou desirest to be filled with the chiefest good, but thou canst not attain it for the present. I am he, saith the Lord whom thou must patiently wait for, until the Kingdom of God doth come.

4. Thou art yet to be tryed upon Earth, and to be exercised in many things. Comfort shall be sometimes given thee, but the abundant fulness thereof shall not be granted. Take courage therefore, and be valiant as well in doing as in suffering things contrary to nature. Thou oughtest to put on the new Man, and to be changed into another Man. Thou must oftentimes do that which thou wouldest not, and leave undone that thou wouldest do. That which is pleasing to others, shall go well forward; that which thou wishest, shall not speed. That which others say, shall be heard; what thou sayest, shall be nothing regarded

ed. Others shall ask and shall receive: Thou shalt ask and not obtain.

5. Others shall be great in the praise of Men, but of thee there shall be no speech. To others this or that shall be committed, but thou shalt be accounted fit for nothing. At this nature will sometimes be troubled, and it is much if thou bearest it with silence. In these and many such like, a faithful Servant of the Lord is wont to be tried how he can deny and break himself in all things. There is scarce any thing, wherein thou hast had such need to dye to thy self, as in seeing and suffering those things that are contrary to thy will; especially when that is commanded, which seemeth unto thee inconvenient, or less profitable. And for that thou being placed under authority darest not resist higher power, therefore it seemeth hard to thee to walk at the beck of another, and to leave all thine own opinion.

6. But consider, Son, the fruit of these labors, the end near at hand, and the reward exceeding great; and thou shalt be so far from sustaining them grievously, that thou wilt take great comfort of thy patience. For in regard of that little of thy

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will,

will, which now thou willingly forsakest, thou shalt always have thy will in Heaven. There thou shalt find all that thou wilt or canst desire; there thou shalt enjoy all good without fear of losing it; there shall thy will be ever one with me; it shall not cover any outward or private thing. There no Man shall withstand thee, no Man complain of thee, no Man hinder thee, nothing come against thee; but all things desired shall be there together present, and refresh thy whole affection, and fill it up to the brim. There I will give thee glory for the reproach which here thou sufferedst; the garment of praise for heaviness; for the lowest place a kingly Throne for ever; there shall the fruit of obedience appear, the labor of repentance rejoyce, and humble subjection shall be gloriously crowned.

7. Now therefore be humbly obedient unto all, and regard not who said or commanded this; but take great heed, that whether thy Superior, or thy inferior, or thine equal, require any thing of thee, or do insinuate their desire; thou take it all in good part, and endeavor to fulfil it with a sincere will. Let one seek this, another that;

that ; let him glory in this, the other in that, and be praised a thousand thousand times ; but do thou neither rejoyce in this, nor in that, but in the contempt of thy self, and only in my good pleasure and honor. This art thou to wish, that whether it be thy life or death, God may be always glorified in thee.

C H A P. L.

How a disconsolate person ought to offer himself into the hands of God.

C*Hristian.* Lord God, Holy Father be thou blessed both now and for evermore, because as thou wilt, so is it done, and what thou doest, is good. Let thy Servant rejoyce in thee, not in himself nor in any thing else ; for thou alone art the true gladness, thou art my hope and my crown, thou art my joy and my honor. O Lord. What hath thy Servant, but what he hath received from thee, even without any merit of his. Thine is all that thou hast given, and whatsoever thou hast made. I am poor, and in labors from my youth ;

youth; and sometimes my soul is sorrowful even unto tears; sometimes also it is troubled in it self by reason of evils which hang over mine head.

2. I long after the joy of peace, I earnestly crave the peace of thy Children that are fed by thee in the light of thy comfort. If thou give peace, if thou pour into my heart holy joy; the soul of thy Servant shall be full of gladness, and shall become devout in thy praise; but if thou withdraw thy self, (as many times thou doest) he will not be able to run the ways of thy commandments, but rather he will bow his knees, and knock his breast, for it is not now with him as it was heretofore, when thy candle shined upon his Head, and he was protected under the shadow of thy wings, from the temptations which violently assaulted him.

3. O righteous Father, and ever to be praised, the hour is come, that thy Servant is to be tryed! Behold dear Father, meet it is that in this hour thy Servant suffer something for thy sake. O Father, evermore to be honored, the hour is come, which from all eternity thou didst foreknow should come; that for a short time
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thy Servant should outwardly be oppressed, but inwardly live for ever with thee; that he should be a little despised, humbled, and made as an abject in the sight of Men, and much afflicted with passions and infirmities; that he may rise again with thee in the morning of the new light, and be glorified in Heaven. Holy Father, thou hast so appointed it and wilt have it so; and this is fulfilled which thy self hast commanded.

4. It is a favor to thy friend that he may suffer, and be afflicted in the world for love of thee, how often soever, and by whom soever, thou permittest it to fall upon him. For in the world nothing cometh to pass, without thy counsel, without thy providence, or without a cause why. It is good for me, Lord, that thou hast afflicted me, that I may learn thy righteous judgments, and cast away all haughtiness of heart, and presumption. It is profitable to me, that shame hath covered my face that I may rather seek to thee for comfort than to Men. I have learned also hereby to dread thy unsearchable judgments, who afflictest the just with the wicked, but not without equity and justice.

5. I give thee thanks, for that thou hast not spared my sins, but hast worn me away with bitter stripes, inflicting sorrows, and sending griefs within and without. There is none under Heaven that can comfort me, but thou my Lord God, the Heavenly Physician of souls, that strikest and healest, bringest down to Hell and bringest back again; let thy correction be upon me, and let thy rod instruct me.

6. Behold dear Father, I am in thy hands. I bow my self under the rod of thy correction; strike my back and my neck too, that my crookedness may be conformed to thy will. Make me an holy and humble disciple of thine, (as thou art wont well to do) that I may be ready at every beck of thy divine pleasure. I commend my self and all mine unto thee to be corrected. It is better to be corrected here, than hereafter. Thou knowest all and every thing, and there is nothing in the conscience of Man which can be hidden from thee. Before things are done, thou knowest that they will come to pass, and hast no need that any should teach thee, or admonish thee of those things which are done on Earth. Thou knowest what is expedient for my profit-

profiting, and how much tribulation is fit to scour off the rust of my sins. Do with me according to thy desired good pleasure, and disdain me not for my sinful life, better and more clearly known to none than to thee alone.

7. Grant me, O Lord, to know that which is to be known, to love that which is to be loved, to praise that which pleaseth thee most, to esteem that which is precious unto thee, to despise that which is contemptible in thy sight; suffer me not to judge according to the sight of the outward eyes, nor to give sentence according to the hearing of the ears of ignorant Men; but to discern of visible and spiritual things with a true judgement, and above all things ever to search after thy good will and pleasure.

8. The minds of Men are often deceived in their judging; the lovers of the world are also deceived in loving only visible things. What is a Man the better, for that he is esteemed great by Man? The deceitful in exalting the deceitful, the vain Man in extolling the vain, the blind in commending the blind, the weak in magnifying the weak, deceiveth him and doth verily

verily more shame him, while he doth vainly praise him. For how much every one is in thy sight, so much he is, and no more.

C H A P. LI.

That a Man ought to imploy himself in works of humility, when strength is wanting for higher imployments.

CHrist. Son, thou art not able always to continue in the more fervent desire of virtue, nor to persist in the higher pitch of contemplation; but thou must sometimes of necessity by reason of original corruption descend to inferior things, and bear the burden of this corruptible life though against thy will, and with grief. As long as thou carriest a mortal body, thou shalt feel trouble and heaviness of heart. Thou oughtest therefore in the flesh oftentimes to bewail the burden of the flesh; for that thou canst not always continue in spiritual exercises and divine contemplation.

2. It is then expedient for thee to flie
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to humble and exterior works, and to refresh thy self with good actions; to expect with a firm confidence my coming, and Heavenly visitation, to bear patiently thy banishment and the dryness of thy mind, till I visit thee again, and deliver thee from all anxieties. For I will make thee forget thy former pains, and enjoy inward quietness. I will lay open before thee the pleasant fields of Holy Scripture, that with an enlarged heart thou mayest begin to run the way of my commandments. And thou shalt say, *That the sufferings of this present time are not worthy of the glory to come, that shall be revealed in us.*

C H A P. LII.

That a Man ought to esteem himself not worthy of comfort, but rather to deserve stripes.

C*Hristian.* Lord, I am not worthy of thy comfort, nor of any spiritual visitation; and therefore thou dealest justly with me, when thou leavest me poor and desolate. For though I could shed a Sea of tears, yet I were not worthy of thy comfort

fort. For (alas) I deserve nothing, but to be scourged and punished, in that I have grievously and often offended thee, and have sinned greatly in many things. All things therefore duly considered, I am not worthy even of the least comfort. But thou O gracious and merciful God, who wilt not that thy works should perish, to shew the riches of thy goodness upon the vessels of mercy, even beyond his desert vouchsafest to comfort thy Servant above the manner of Men. For thy comforts are not like to the words of Men.

2. What have I done, O Lord, that thou shouldest bestow any Heavenly comfort upon me? I remember not that I have done any good, but have been always prone to sin, and slow to amendment. This is true, and I cannot deny it. If I should say otherwise, thou wouldest stand against me, and there would be none to defend me. What have I deserved for my sins, but Hell and everlasting fire? I confess in very truth that I am worthy of all scorn and contempt, and it is not fit that I should be remembred amongst thy holy ones. And although I be unwilling to hear this, yet notwithstanding for the truths

truths sake I will lay open my sins against my self, that so the sooner I may obtain mercy at thy hand.

3. What shall I say being guilty and full of all confusion? I have nothing to say but this, I have sinned. Lord, I have sinned; have mercy on me, pardon me; suffer me a little, that I may bewail my grief, before I go unto the land of darkness, a land covered with the shadow of death; What dost thou so much require of a guilty and miserable sinner, as that he be contrite, and humble himself for his offences? Of true contrition and humbling of the heart, ariseth hope of forgiveness; the troubled conscience is reconciled *to God*, the favor of God, which was lost, is recovered; Man is preserved from the wrath to come, and God and the penitent soul meet together with an holy kiss.

4. Humble contrition for sins is an acceptable sacrifice unto thee, O Lord, favoring much sweeter in thy presence than the perfume of frankincense. This is also the pleasant ointment, which thou wouldest should be poured upon thy sacred feet; for thou never despisest a contrite and humbled heart. There is the place of refuge,

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from the angry face of the enemy ; there is amended and washed away, whatsoever defilement elsewhere was contracted, and whatsoever is polluted.

C H A P. LIII.

That the grace of God doth not joyn it self with those that savor of Earthly things.

CHrist. Son, my grace is precious, it suffereth not it self to be mingled with external things, nor earthly comforts. Thou oughtest therefore to cast away all hindrances of grace, if thou desire to receive the infusion thereof. Choose therefore a secret place to thy self, love to live alone with thy self, desire the conversation of none ; but rather pour out devout Prayers unto God, that thou mayest keep thy mind in compunction, and thy conscience pure. Esteem the whole world as nothing ; prefer attendance upon God before all outward things ; for thou canst not attend upon me, and be delighted also in transitory vanities. Thou oughtest to sequester thy self from thy acquaintance and friends,
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and to keep thy mind void of all temporal comfort. So the blessed Apostle *Peter* required, that the faithful of Christ should keep themselves as strangers and pilgrims in this world.

2. O how great a confidence shall he have at the hour of death, whom no affection to any Earthly thing detaineth in the world! but the sickly mind is not yet capable of so retired a heart; neither doth the carnal Man understand the liberty of him who is inwardly recollected. Notwithstanding if he will be truly spiritual, he ought to renounce as well those which are strangers, as those which are near unto him; and to beware of no Man more than of himself. If thou perfectly overcome thy self, thou shalt with more ease subdue the rest. It is a perfect victory to triumph over our selves. For he that keepeth himself subject in such sort that his sensuality be subdued to reason, and reason in all things be obedient to me; he is truly a conqueror of himself, and Lord of the world.

3. If thou desire to mount unto this height, thou must set out couragiously, and lay the Ax to the root; that thou

mayst pluck up and destroy that hidden inordinate inclination to thy self, and unto all private and Earthly good. Of this sin (that Man too inordinately loveth himself) almost all dependeth, whatsoever is throughly to be overcome; which evil being once overcome, and subdued, there will presently ensue great peace and tranquillity. But for that few endeavor perfectly to die unto themselves, and altogether to go out of themselves, therefore they remain intangled in themselves, and cannot be lifted up in spirit above themselves. But he that desireth to walk freely with me, it is necessary that he mortifie all evil and inordinate affections, and that he should not earnestly adhere unto any creature by private love.

C H A P. LIV.

Of the different motions of Nature and Grace.

C*Hrist.* Son, mark diligently the motions of *Nature* and *Grace*; for in a very contrary and subtil manner these are moved,

profitable to many. *Nature* willingly receiveth honor and reverence; but *Grace* faithfully attributeth all honor and glory unto God.

3. *Nature* feareth shame and contempt; but *Grace* rejoyceth to suffer reproach for the Name of Jesus. *Nature* loveth idleness and bodily rest; but *Grace* cannot be idle, but willingly imbraceth labor. *Nature* seeketh to have those things that be curious and glorious, abhorreth that which is mean and course; but *Grace* delighteth in plain and humble things, despiseth not rough things, nor refuseth to wear that which is old and torn.* *Nature* respecteth temporal things, rejoyceth at Earthly gain, sorroweth for loss, is moved with every little injurious word; but *Grace* thinketh on that which is everlasting, and cleaveth not to temporal things, she is not troubled with losses, nor disquieted with hard words; for that she hath placed her treasure and joy in Heaven, where nothing perisheth.

4. *Nature* is covetous, and doth more willingly receive than give, she loveth proper and private things; but *Grace* is bountiful and liberal to all; shunneth private interest,

interest, is content with a little, thinketh that it is more blessed to give than to receive. *Nature* is bent to the creatures, to her own flesh, to vanities, and to many vagaries; but *Grace* draweth unto God and unto goodness, renounceth creatures, flyeth the world, hateth the desires of the flesh, restraineth wandrings abroad, blusheth to be seen in publick; *Nature* is willing to have some outward comfort, wherein she may be sensibly delighted; but *Grace* seeketh comfort in God alone, and delighteth above all visible things in the highest good.

5. *Nature* worketh all for her own gain and profit, she can do nothing freely, but for bestowed benefits she hopeth to obtain either that which is equal, or better, either praise or favor, and coveteth to have her works and gifts much esteemed; but *Grace* seeketh no temporal thing, nor desireth any other reward than God alone; nor asketh more of temporal necessities, than what may serve her for the obtaining of things eternal.

3. *Nature* rejoyceth to have many friends and kinsfolks, she glorieth of noble place and birth; pleaseth the powerful, fawneth

upon the rich, applaudeth those that are like her self; but *Grace* loveth even her enemies, and is not puffed up with multitude of friends; nor esteemeth place or birth, but where it is joyned with greater virtue; she rather favoreth the poor than the rich; hath more compassion of the innocent than the powerful; rejoyceth in the true, not in the deceitful; always exhorteth good Men to labor for the better gifts; and by goodness to resemble the Son of God. *Nature* quickly complaineth of want and trouble; *Grace* constantly endureth need.

7. *Nature* referreth all things to her self, striveth and contendeth for her self; but *Grace* reduceth all to God, from whence originally they proceed; she ascribeth no good to her self, neither doth she arrogantly presume; she contendeth not, nor preferreth her opinion before others; but in every apprehension and opinion submitteth her self unto the eternal wisdom and to the divine judgment. *Nature* coveteth to know secrets, and to hear news; she will appear abroad, and make proof of many things by her own senses; she desireth to be known, and to do those things, for which she may be

be praised and admired; but *Grace* careth not for hearing news, nor to understand curious matters; for that all this springeth from the old corruption of Man, seeing here is nothing new and durable upon Earth. She teacheth therefore to restrain the senses, to avoid vain pleasing and ostentation, humbly to hide those things that are worthy of praise and admiration; and of every thing and every knowledg to seek profitable fruit, and the praise and honor of God; she will not have her self nor hers publickly praised, but desireth that God should be blessed in his gifts, who of mere love bestoweth all things.

8. This *Grace* is a supernatural light; and a certain special gift of God, and the proper mark of the elect, and pledg of everlasting salvation; which raiseth up a Man from Earthly things to love the things of Heaven, and of a carnal maketh him a spiritual Man. How much the more therefore *Nature* is depressed and subdued, so much the greater *Grace* is infused, and the inward Man daily by new visitations more reformed according to the image of God.

C H A P. LV.

*Of the corruption of Nature, and efficacy of
divine Grace.*

C*hristian.* O Lord my God, who hast created me after thy Image and likeness, grant me this grace which thou hast shewed to be so great and so necessary to salvation, that I may overcome my wicked nature, which draweth me to sin and to perdition. For I feel in my flesh the Law of sin, contradicting the Law of my mind, and leading me captive to the obeying of sensuality in many things; neither can I resist the passions thereof, unless thy most holy grace fervently infused into my heart, do assist me.

2. Thy grace, O Lord, and great grace is needful, that nature may be overcome, which is ever prone to evil from her youth. For by Adam the first Man, nature being fallen and corrupted by sin, the penalty of this stain hath descended upon all Mankind, in such sort, that nature itself which by thee was created good and upright, is now accounted for the sin and for the infirmity of corrupted nature; for
that

that the motion thereof left unto it self draweth to evil and to inferior things. For the little power which remaineth, is like a certain spark lying hidden in ashes. This is natural reason it self, encompassed about with great darkness, yet still retaining power to discern good and evil, and the difference between true and false; although it be unable to fulfil all that it approveth; and enjoyeth not now the full light of truth, nor the soundness of her affections.

3. Hence it is, my God, that after the inward Man I delight in thy Law, knowing thy commandments to be good, just, and holy, reproving also all evil and sin, teaching that it is to be avoided. But with the flesh I serve the law of sin, whilst I rather obey sensuality than reason. Hence it is that to will to do good is present with me, but how to perform it I find not. For this cause I often purpose many good things, but because I want grace to help my weakness, upon a light resistance I go back and faint. Hence it is that I know the way of perfection, and see clearly enough what I ought to do; but pressed down with the weight of mine own corruption

tion, I rise not unto what is more perfect.

4. O Lord, how exceeding needful is thy grace for me, to begin any good work, to go forward, and to accomplish it; For without it I can do nothing, but in thee I can do all things, when thy grace doth strengthen me. O Heavenly grace indeed, without which our most worthy actions are nothing, and no gifts of nature are to be esteemed. Arts, riches, beauty or strength, wit or eloquence, are of no value with thee, O Lord, without thy grace. For gifts of nature are common to good and bad, but the peculiar gift of the elect is grace and love; and they that bear this honorable mark, are esteemed worthy of everlasting life. This grace is so eminent, that neither the gift of prophesie, nor the working of miracles; nor any speculation (how high soever) is of any esteem without it. Neither faith nor hope, nor other virtues are acceptable unto thee without love and grace.

5. O most blessed Grace, that makest the poor in spirit rich in virtues, and makest the rich in many blessings to be humble in heart; come, come down unto me, replenish

plenish me early with thy comfort, lest my soul should faint for weariness and dryness of mind. I beseech thee, O Lord, that I may find grace in thy sight; for thy grace is sufficient for me, though other things that nature desireth be wanting. If I be tempted and vexed with many tribulations, I will not fear any evils, whilst thy grace is with me; that is my strength; that giveth advice and help; that is stronger than all enemies, and wiser than all the wise.

6. Thy grace is the mistress of truth, the teacher of discipline, the light of the heart, the solace in affliction, the driver away of sorrow, the expeller of fear, the nurse of devotion, the mother of tears. What am I without it, but a withered piece of wood, and an unprofitable stalk only meet to be cast away? Let thy grace therefore, O Lord, always prevent me and follow me, and make me ever diligent in good works, through Jesus Christ thy Son.
Amen.

C H A P. LVI.

*That we ought to deny our selves, and imitate
Christ by the Croß.*

C*Hrist.* Son, look how much thou goest out of thy self, so much mayst thou enter into me. As to be void of all desire of external things, maketh inward peace; so the forsaking of our selves inwardly, joyneth unto God. I will have thee learn the perfect leaving of thy self to my will, without contradiction and complaint. Follow me, I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life. Without the way there is no going aright, without truth there is no knowledge, without life there is no living. I am the way which thou oughtest to follow; the truth which thou oughtest to trust; the life for which thou oughtest to hope. I am the way inviolable, the truth intallible, the life which cannot end. I am the most straight way, the supreme truth, the true life, yea the blessed life, the uncreated life. If thou remain in my way thou shalt keep the truth,

truth, and the truth shall make thee free; and thou shalt lay hold on everlasting life.

2. If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments. If thou wilt know the truth, believe me. If thou wilt be perfect, sell all. If thou wilt be my Disciple, deny thy self. If thou wilt possess a blessed life, despise this present life. If thou wilt be exalted in Heaven, humble thy self upon Earth. If thou wilt reign with me, bear the Cross with me. For only the Servants of the Cross find the way of bliss and true light.

3. *Christian.* Lord Jesus, forasmuch as thy way is narrow and contemptible unto the world, grant me grace to imitate thee in suffering worldly contempt. For the Servant is not greater than his Lord, nor the Disciple above his Master. Let thy Servant be exercised in thy holy life, for therein my salvation and the true holiness doth consist; whatsoever I read or hear besides it, doth not recreate or delight me fully.

4. *Christ.* Son, now that thou knowest and hast read these things, happy shalt thou be, if thou do them. He that hath
my

my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and I will love him, and will manifest my self unto him, and will make him sit with me in the Kingdom of my Father.

Christian. Lord Jesus, as thou hast said and promised, so let it come to pass, and grant that I may not wholly undeserve this favor. I have received the Cross, I have received it from thy hand; I will bear it, and bear it till death, as thou hast laid it upon me. Truly the life of a good retired person is the Cross, but yet it is a guide to Paradise. It is now begun, it is not lawful to go back, neither is it fit to leave that which I have undertaken.

5. Let us then take courage, my Brethren, and go forwards together, Jesus will be with us. For Jesus's sake we have undertaken this Cross, for Jesus's sake let us persevere in the Cross. He will be our helper, who is our guide and forerunner. Behold our King goeth before us, who also will fight for us; let us follow him manfully, let none be dismayed; but be we ready to die valiantly in the battle, and let us not blemish our glory by flying from the Cross.

CHAP.

C H A P. LVII.

*That a Man be not too much dejected; when
he falleth into some defects.*

C*Hrist.* Son, patience and humility in adversities are more pleasing to me, than much comfort and devotion in prosperities. Why art thou grieved for every little trifle spoken and done against thee? Although it had been much more thou oughtest not to have been moved. But now let it pass; it is not the first that hath happened, nor is it any new thing, neither shall it be the last, if thou live long. Thou art manly enough, as long as no adversity happeneth. Thou canst give good counsel also, and canst strengthen others with thy words; but when any tribulation suddenly comes to thy door, thou art destitute of counsel and strength. See therefore thy great frailty which thou often hast experience of in every small occurrence. It is notwithstanding intended for thy good, when these and such like things befall thee.

2. Put it out of thy heart the best thou
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canst, and if it touch thee yet let it not de-
ject thee, nor trouble thee long ; bear it
at least patiently, if thou canst not joy-
fully. Although thou be unwilling to
hear it, and conceivest indignation thereat,
yet restrain thy self, and suffer no inordi-
nate word to pass out of thy mouth, where-
by the little ones may be offended. The
storm which now is raised shall quickly be
appeased, and inward grief shall be sweet-
ened by the return of grace. I yet live,
saith the Lord, and am ready to help thee,
and to give thee greater comfort than be-
fore, if thou put thy trust in me and callest
devoutly upon me.

3. Be more patient, and prepare thy
self to greater suffering. All is not lost, if
thou feel thy self often afflicted or griev-
ously tempted. Thou art a Man, and not
God ; thou art flesh, not an Angel. How
canst thou look to continue ever in the
same state of virtue, when an Angel in
Heaven hath fallen, as also the first Man
in Paradise ? I am he who will strengthen
with health them that mourn, and do raise
up unto divine glory those that know their
own infirmity.

4. *Christian.* Lord, blessed be thy
word,

word, more sweet unto my mouth than the hony and the hony-comb. What should I do in these my so great tribulations and straits, unless thou didst comfort me with thy holy words? What matter is it, how much, and what I suffer, so as I may at length attain to the port of salvation? Grant me a good end, grant me a happy passage out of this world. Be mindful of me, O my God, and direct me the right way to thy Kingdom, *Amen.*

C H A P. LVIII.

Of not searching into high matters and into the secret judgments of God.

C*Hrist.* Son beware thou dispute not of high matters, nor of the secret judgments of God, why this Man is left, and that Man taken into so great favor; why also this Man is so much afflicted, and that Man so greatly advanced, these things are beyond the reach of Man, neither can any reason or disputation search out the judgment of God. When the enemy therefore suggesteth these things unto thee,

or some curious people enquire of thee, answer that of the Prophet, *Thou art just, O Lord, and thy judgment is right.* And again, *The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.* My judgments are to be feared, not to be dissembled; for they are such as cannot be comprehended by the understanding of Man.

2. In like manner I advise thee not to enquire, nor dispute of the merits of the Saints, which of them is holier than the other, and which is greater in the Kingdom of Heaven, These things oftentimes breed strife and unprofitable contentions, they nourish also pride and vain glory; from whence do spring envy and dissensions, whilst one will proudly prefer this, and the other, another. To desire to know and search out such things, is to no purpose; nor would it please the Saints; for I am not the God of dissention, but of peace; which peace consisteth rather in true humility, than in self exaltation.

3. Some are carried with zeal of affection, to love these or those most; but this love is rather humane than divine. I am He who made all the Saints, and have given

ven them grace ; I have given them glory, I know what every one hath deserved ; I have prevented them with the blessings of my goodness. I foreknew my beloved before the beginning of the world. I chose them out of the world, they chose not me first, I called them by grace, I drew them by mercy, I led them through sundry temptations. I have poured into them glorious comforts, I have given them perseverance, I have crowned their patience.

4. I know both the first and the last ; I embrace all with inestimable love. I am to be praised in all my Saints ; I am to be blessed above all things, and to be honored in every one, whom I have thus gloriously exalted and predestinated without any precedent merits of their own. He therefore that contemneth one of the least of my Saints, honoreth not the greatest ; for that I made both the less and the greater ; and he that dispraiseth any of my Saints, dispraiseth also me, and all the rest in the Kingdom of Heaven. There all are one through the bond of love ; they think the same, they will the same, and they all love one another.

5. But yet (which is much more high) they love me more than themselves, and are drawn out of all themselves or any merits of their own. For being ravished above self-love, they are wholly carried out to love me, in whom also they do fruitively rest. Nothing can turn them back, nothing can press them down ; for being full of the eternal Truth, they burn with the fire of unquenchable love. Let therefore carnal and natural Men who can affect no other but their private joys, forbear to dispute of the state of Saints. They add and take away according to their own fancies, not as it pleaseth the eternal Truth.

6. Many are ignorant, but specially those that be slenderly enlightned ; and these can seldom love any with a perfect spiritual love. They are as yet much drawn by a natural affection and humane friendship to this Man or to that ; and according to the experience they have of themselves in their Earthly affections, so they frame an imagination of Heavenly things. But there is an incomparable distance between the things which the imperfect ones imagine in their conceits, and those which
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the illuminated ones do see by revelation from above.

7. Beware therefore, my Son, that thou treat not curiously of these things, which exceed thy knowledg; but rather so apply thy endeavors, that thou mayest at least have the meanest place in the Kingdom of Heaven. And if any one did know which of the Saints exceed others in sanctity, or were greater in the Kingdom of Heaven; what would this knowledg avail him, unless he should thereby humble himself the more in my sight, and should rise up into the greater praising of my name? He pleaseth God much better that thinketh of the greatness of his sins, and the smalness of his graces, and how far off he is from the perfection of the Saints; than he that disputeth of their greatness or littleness.

8. They are well and right well contented, if Men could content themselves, and refrain from these vain discourses. They glory not of their own merits, for they ascribe no good unto themselves, but attribute all to me, who of my infinite love have given them all things. They are filled with so great love of the Divinity, and with such an overflowing joy, that there

is no glory nor happiness, that is or can be wanting unto them. All the Saints, how much the higher they be in glory, so much the more humble they are in themselves, and nearer and dearer unto me; And therefore it is written, That they did cast their Crowns before God, and fell down upon their face before the Lamb, and adored him that liveth for ever and ever.

9. Many inquire who is greatest in the Kingdom of God, that know not whether they shall ever be numbred there amongst the least. It is a great thing to be even the least in Heaven, where all are great; for that all there shall be called, and shall be indeed, the Sons of God. *The least shall become a Thousand; and the sinner of an Hundred years shall die.* For when the Disciples asked who should be greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven, they received this answer, Unless you be converted, and become as little Children, you shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven: Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little Child, the same is greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven.

10. Wo be unto them that disdain to humble

humble themselves willingly with little Children. For the low gate of the Kingdom of Heaven will not give them entrance. And wo be to the rich, that have their comforts here; for whilest the poor enter into the Kingdom of God, they shall stand lamenting without. Rejoyce you that be humble, and you that be poor be you glad, for yours is the Kingdom of God, if you walk according to the truth.

· C H A P. LIX.



That all our hope and trust is to be fixed in God alone.

C*hristian.* Lord, what trust have I in this life? Or what is the greatest comfort, that all things under Heaven do yield me? Is it not thou, my Lord God, whose mercies are without number? Where hath it been well with me without thee? Or when could it be ill with me, when thou wert present? I had rather be poor for thee,
than

than rich without thee. I rather choose to be a pilgrim on Earth with thee, than to possess Heaven without thee. Where thou art, there is Heaven; and there is death and Hell, where thou art not, Thou art my desire, and therefore it becometh me to sigh and cry and pray unto thee. For I have none fully to trust in, none that can seasonably help me in my necessities, but thee alone, my God. Thou art my hope, thou art my trust; thou art my comforter, and most faithful unto me in all things.

2. All Men seek their own gain; thou only seekest my salvation and my profit, and turnest all things to my good. Although thou exposest me to divers temptations and adversities, yet thou orderest all this to my advantage, who art wont to try thy beloved ones a Thousand wayes. In which trial thou oughtest no less to be loved and praised, then if thou didst fill me with Heavenly comforts.

3. In thee therefore, O Lord God, I put my whole hope and refuge; in thee I place my tribulation and anguish; for I find all to be weak and unconstant, whatsoever I behold out of thee. For neither can many
friends

friends avail, nor strong helpers aid, nor wise counsellors give any profitable answer, nor the Books of the learned comfort, nor any wealth deliver, nor any secret or pleasant place defend; if thou thyself dost not assist, help, strengthen, comfort, instruct, and keep us.

4. For all things that seem to belong to the attainment of peace and felicity, without thee are nothing, and do bring indeed no felicity at all. Thou therefore art the end of all that is good, the height of life, the depth of wisdom, and the strongest comfort of thy servants is to trust in thee above all things. To thee therefore do I lift up mine eyes, in thee O my God, the Father of mercies, I put my trust. Bless and sanctifie my soul with thy Heavenly blessings, that it may be made thy holy habitation, and the seat of thy eternal glory; and that nothing may be found in the Temple of thy glory, that may offend the eyes of thy Majesty. According to the greatness of thy goodness, and multitude of thy mercies look upon me, and hear the prayer of thy poor Servant, who is far exiled from thee in the land
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of the shadow of death. Protect and keep the soul of thy Servant, amidst so many dangers of this corruptible life, and by thy grace accompanying me direct it by the way of peace, to the country of everlasting light, *Amen.*

T H E



THE FOURTH

B O O K.

A devout Exhortation unto the holy Communion.

The voice of Christ.

Come unto me, all ye that labor and are burdened, and I will refresh you, saith the Lord. The bread which I will give, is my flesh, for the life of the world. Take ye and eat, that is my body that is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me and I in him. The words which I have spoken unto you, are spirit and life.

CHAP.

C H A P. I.

With how great reverence Christ ought to be received.

The voice of the disciple.

THese are thy words, O Christ the everlasting Truth, though not spoken all at one time, nor written in one and the self same place. Because therefore they are thine and true, they are all thankfully and faithfully to be received by me. They are thine, and thou hast spoken them; and they are mine also, because thou hast spoken them for my salvation. I willingly receive them from thy mouth, that they may be the deeper imprinted in my heart. These so gracious words, so full of sweetness and love, do encourage me, but mine own offences do dishearten me, and my impure conscience driveth me back from the receiving of so great mysteries. The sweetness of thy words doth encourage me, but the multitude of my sins doth oppress me.

2. Thou commandest me to come confidently unto thee, if I will have part with thee;

thee; and to receive the food of immortality, if I desire to obtain everlasting life and glory. Come, saist thou, unto me, all ye that labor and are burdened, and I wil refresh you. O sweet and loving word in the ear of a sinner, that thou, my Lord God, shouldest invite the poor and needy to the participation of thy most holy body! But who am I, Lord, that I may presume to approach unto thee? Behold the Heavens cannot contain thee, and thou saist, Come ye all unto me.

3. What meaneth this so gracious a condescension, and this so loving invitation? How shall I dare to come, that know not any good in my self, whereupon I may presume? How shall I bring thee unto my House, that have so often offended thy most gracious countenance? The Angels and the Archangels honor thee, the Saints and just Men do fear thee, and saist thou, Come ye all unto me? Unless thou O Lord, didst say it, who would believe it to be true? And unless thou didst command it, who would attempt to come unto thee? Behold *Noah* a just Man labored a Hundred years in the making of the Ark, that he might be saved with a few, and how can I
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in one hours space prepare my self to receive with reverence the Maker of the world :

4. *Moses* thy great Servant, and thy especial friend, made an Ark of incorruptible wood, which also he covered with most pure Gold, to put the Tables of the Law therein ; and I a corruptible creature, how shall I dare so lightly to receive the Maker of the Law, and the giver of life ? *Solomon* the wisest of the Kings of *Israel* bestowed Seven years in building a magnificent Temple to the praise of thy Name, and celebrated the feast of Dedication thereof Eight days together ; he offered a Thousand peace-offerings, and he solemnly set the Ark in the place prepared for it, with the sound of Trumpets, and joy ; and I the most miserable and poorest of Men, how shall I bring thee into my House, that can scarce spend one half hour religiously ? And I wish I could once spend about one half hour in a worthy and due manner !

5. O my God, how much did they endeavor to please thee, and alas how little is that which I do ! How little time do I spend to prepare my self to receive ! I am
feldom

seldom wholly recollected, very seldom free from all distraction; and yet surely no unbecoming thought ought to appear in the comfortable presence of thy Deity, nor any creature wholly take me up; for I am not to harbor an Angel, but the Lord of Angels.

6. And yet there is great difference between the Ark of the Covenant with its reliques, and thy most pure body with its unspeakable virtues; between those legal Sacrifices, figures of future things, and the true Sacrifice of thy body, the complement of all antient Sacrifices. Why therefore am I not more zealous in thy venerable presence? Wherefore do I not prepare myself with greater care to receive thy holy things; sith those holy antient Patriarchs and Prophets, yea Kings also and Princes, with the whole people, have shewed such an affectionateness of devotion to thy divine service?

7. The most devout King *David* danced before the Ark of God with all his might, calling to mind the benefits bestowed in times past upon his Forefathers. He made instruments of sundry kinds, he published Psalms, and appointed them to be sung
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with joy; he also oftentimes sung to the harp, being inspired with the grace of the holy Ghost. He taught the people of *Israel* to praise God with their whole heart, and with pleasant voices every day to bless and praise him. If so great devotion was then used, and such celebrating of divine praise before the Ark of the Testament; what reverence and devotion is now to be performed by me and all Christian people at the Sacrament, in receiving the most precious body of Christ?

8. O God the invisible Creator of the world how wonderfully dost thou deal with us! how sweetly and graciously dost thou dispose of all things with thine elect, to whom thou offerest thy self to be received in the Sacrament! O this exceedeth all understanding! This chiefly draweth the hearts of the religious and inflameth their affections. For thy true faithful Servants that dispose their whole life to amendment, by this most precious Sacrament, oftentimes gain much of the grace of devotion, and love of holiness.

9. O the admirable and hidden grace of this Sacrament, which only the faithful ones of Christ do know; but the unbelieving,

lieving, and such as are slaves unto sin, cannot have experience thereof! In this Sacrament spiritual grace is given, and strength which was lost is restored in the soul, and the beauty disfigured by sin returneth again. This grace is sometimes so great, that out of the fulness of devotion which is here given, not only the mind, but the weak body also, feeleth great increase of strength.

10. Our coldness and negligence surely is much to be wailed and pittied, that we are not drawn with greater affection to receive Christ, in whom all the hope and merit of those that are to be saved doth consist. For he is our sanctification and redemption; he is the comfort of those who are here but travellers, and the everlasting fruition of Saints. It is much therefore to be lamented that many do so little consider this comfortable mystery, which rejoyceth Heaven, and preserveth the whole world. O the blindness and hardness of Mans heart, that doth not more deeply weigh so unspeakable a gift; but rather cometh by the daily use thereof to regard it little or nothing!

11. For if this most holy Sacrament
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should be celebrated in one place only, and consecrated by one only Minister in the world; with how great desires dost thou think would Men be affected to that place, and to such a Minister, that they might enjoy the celebration of these divine mysteries? But now there are many Ministers, and Christ is offered in many places; that so the grace and love of God to Man may appear so much the greater, how much the more this sacred Communion is spread through the world. Thanks be unto thee good Jesus, the everlasting shepherd, that hast vouchsafed to refresh us who are poor and in a state of banishment, with thy precious body and blood, and to invite us to the receiving of these mysteries with the words of thy own mouth, saying, Come unto me all ye that labor and are burdened, and I will refresh you.

C H A P. II.

That the great goodness and love of God is exhibited to Man in this Sacrament.

The voice of the Disciple.

IN confidence of thy goodness and great mercy, O Lord, being sick, I approach unto my Savior, being hungry and thirsty to the Fountain of life, needy to the King of Heaven, a Servant unto my Lord, a creature to my Creator, being disconsolate I come to thee my merciful comforter. But whence is this to me, that thou vouchsafest to come unto me? Who am I that thou shouldest give thy self unto me? How dare a sinner appear before thee? And how is it that thou dost vouchsafe to come unto a sinner? Thou knowest thy Servant and seest that he hath no good thing in him, for which thou shouldest bestow this favor upon him. I confess therefore my unworthiness, and I acknowledg thy goodness; I praise thy mercy, and give thee thanks for this thy transcendent love. For thou dost this for thine own sake, not for any

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merits

merits of mine; to the end that thy goodness may be better known unto me, thy love more abundantly shewed, and thy gracious condescension may be the more eminently set forth. Since therefore it is thy pleasure, and thou hast commanded that it should be so, this thy favor is also dearly pleasing to me, and I wish that my sins may be no hindrance herein.

2. O most sweet and benign Jesus, how great reverence and thanks together with perpetual praise, is due unto thee for the receiving of thy sacred body, whose preciousness no Man is able to express! But what shall I think of at this Communion, now that I am to approach unto my Lord, whom I am not able duly to honor, and yet I desire to receive him with devotion? What can I think better, and more profitable, than to humble my self wholly before thee, and to exalt thy infinite goodness above me? I praise thee my God, and will exalt thee for ever; and I do despise and submit my self unto thee, in a deep sense of my own unworthiness.

3. Behold thou art the Holy of Holies, and I the skum of sinners! Behold thou inclinest unto me, who am not worthy so much

much as to look up unto thee ! Behold thou comest unto me ! It is thy will to be with me, thou inviteest me to thy banquet. Thou wilt give me the food of Heaven, and bread of Angels to eat, which is no other indeed than thy self, the living bread, that descendest from Heaven, and givest life unto the world.

4. Behold from whence doth this love proceed ! What a gracious condescension of thine appeareth herein ! How great thanks and praises are due unto thee for these benefits ! O how good and profitable was thy counsel, when thou ordainedst it ! How sweet and pleasant the banquet, when thou gavest thy self to be our food ! How wonderful is this thy doing, O Lord, how mighty is thy power, how unspeakable is thy truth ! For thou sayest the word, and all things were made ; and this was done which thou commandest.

5. A thing of great admiration, that thou, my Lord God, true God, and Man, shouldest be exhibited unto us by the Elements of Bread and Wine. Thou who art the Lord of all things and standest in need of none, had pleased to dwell in us by means of this thy Sacrament ; preserve my

heart and body unspotted, that with a chearful and pure conscience I may often celebrate thy mysteries, and receive them to my everlasting health; which thou hast chiefly ordained and instituted for thy honor and for a perpetual memorial.

6. Rejoyce, O my soul, and give thanks unto God for so noble a gift, and so singular a comfort left unto thee in this vale of tears. For as often as thou callest to mind this mystery, and receivest the body of Christ; so often dost thou remember the work of thy redemption, and art made partaker of all the merits of Christ. For the love of Christ is never diminished, and the greatness of his propitiation is never exhausted. Therefore thou oughtest always to dispose thy self hereunto by a fresh renewing of thy mind, and to weigh with attentive consideration this great mystery of thy salvation. So great, new, and joyful it ought to seem unto thee, when thou comest to these holy mysteries; as if the same day Christ first descending into the womb of the Virgin, were become Man; or hanging on the Cross did suffer and die for salvation of Mankind.

CHAP.

C H A P. III.

That it is profitable to communicate often.

The voice of the Disciple.

BEhold, O Lord, I come unto thee, that I may be comforted in thy gift, and be delighted in thy holy banquet, which thou, O God, hast prepared in thy goodness for the poor. Behold in thee is all whatsoever I can or ought to desire; thou art my salvation and my redemption, my hope and my strength, my honor and my glory, make joyful therefore this day the soul of thy Servant, for that I have lifted it up to thee. O Lord Jesus, I desire to receive thee now with devotion and reverence. I do long to bring thee into my house, that with *Zacheus* I may obtain to be blessed by thee, and to be numbred amongst the Children of *Abraham*. My soul thirsteth to receive thy body, my heart desireth to be united with thee.

2. Give thy self to me, and it sufficeth; for besides thee no comfort is available. I cannot be without thee, nor live without thy visitation. And therefore I must often
come

come unto thee, and receive thee for the welfare of my ioul; lest perhaps I faint in the way, if I be deprived of thy Heavenly food. For so, most merciful Jesus, thou once didst say, preaching to the people and curing sundry diseases, *I will not send them home fasting, lest they faint in the way.* Deal thou therefore in like manner now with me, who hast vouchsafed to leave thy self in the Sacrament for the comfort of the faithful. For thou art the sweet refection of the soul; and he that eateth thee worthily, shall be partaker and heir of everlasting glory. It is necessary for me, that do often fall and sin, and so quickly wax dull and faint, that by frequent prayer and confession, and receiving of thy holy body, I renew, cleanse, and inflame my self; lest perhaps by long abstaining I should fall from my holy purpose.

3. For the imaginations of Man are prone unto evil from his youth, and unless some divine remedy help him, he quickly slideth to worse. This holy Communion therefore draweth back from evil and strengtheneth in good. For if I be now so often slack and cold when I communicate, or celebrate; what would become of me if I
received

received not this remedy, and sought not after so great an help? Though every day I be not fit, nor well prepared to communicate; I will endeavor notwithstanding at due times to receive the divine mysteries, and to be partaker of so great a grace. For this is one chief comfort of a faithful soul, whilest she wandreth from thee in this mortal body, that being often mindful of her God, she receive her beloved with a devout mind.

4. O the wonderful condescend of thy mercy towards us, that thou O Lord God, the Creator and giver of life to all spirits, dost vouchsafe to come unto a poor soul, and with thy whole Deity and Humanity to replenish her hunger! O happy mind and blessed soul, that obtains to receive thee, her Lord God, with devout affection, and in receiving of thee to be filled with spiritual joy! O how great a Lord doth she entertain! How beloved a guest doth she harbor! How pleasant a companion doth she receive! How faithful a friend doth she take in! How lovely and noble a spouse doth she embrace! She embraceth him who is to be loved above all that is beloved, and above all things that may
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be desired. Let Heaven and Earth and all their furniture be silent in thy presence; for what praise and beauty soever they have, it is received from thy bounty, and shall not equal the beauty of thy Name, whose wisdom is infinite.

C H A P. IV.

*That many benefits are bestowed upon them
that communicate devoutly.*

The voice of the Disciple.

MY Lord God, prevent thy Servant with the blessings of thy sweetness; that I may approach worthily and devoutly to thy glorious Sacrament; stir up my heart unto thee, and deliver me from all dulness; visit me with thy salvation, that I may taste in spirit thy sweetness, which plentifully lieth hid in this Sacrament, as in a fountain. Enlighten also my eyes to behold so great a mystery, and strengthen me to believe it with undoubted faith. For it is thy work, and not Mans power; thy sacred institution, not Mans invention. For no Man is of himself able to comprehend

hend and understand these things, which surpass the understanding even of Angels. What therefore shall I unworthy sinner, dust and ashes, be able to search and comprehend of so high and sacred a mystery?

2. O Lord, in the simplicity of my heart, with a good and firm faith, and at thy commandment, I come unto thee with hope and reverence, and do truly believe that thou art present in the Sacrament. Thy will is, that I receive thee, and that by love I unite my self unto thee. Wherefore I implore thy mercy, and do crave thy special grace, to the end I may wholly melt and flow over with love unto thee, and hereafter never harbor any external comfort. For this most high and worthy Sacrament is the health of the soul and body, the remedy of all spiritual weakness; hereby my vices are cured, my passions bridled, temptations overcome or weakened, greater grace is infused, virtue begun increased, faith confirmed, hope strengthened and love inflamed, and enlarged.

3. For thou hast bestowed, and still oftentimes dost bestow many benefits in this Sacrament upon thy beloved ones that

com-

communicate devoutly, O my God, the Protector of my soul, the strengthner of humane frailty, and the giver of all inward comfort. Thou impartest unto them much comfort against sundry tribulations; and liftest them up from the depth of their own dejectedness, to hope in thy protection; and dost inwardly refresh and illustrate them with new grace, so that they who before Communion felt themselves heavy and indisposed, afterwards being refreshed with Heavenly meat and drink, do find in themselves a great change to the better. And in such a way of dispensation thou dealest with thy elect, that they may truly acknowledg, and patiently prove, how great their own infirmity is, and what goodness and grace they receive from thee. For they of themselves are cold, dull and undevout; but by thee they are made fervent, chearful, and full of devotion. For who is there, that approaching humbly unto the fountain of sweetness, doth not carry away from thence at least some little sweetness? Or who standing by a great fire, receiveth not some small heat thereby? Thou art a fountain always full and overflowing, a fire ever burning and never decaying.

4. Where-

4. Wherefore if I cannot draw out of the full fountain it self, nor drink my fill ; I will notwithstanding set my lips to the mouth of this Heavenly conduit, that I may draw from thence at least some small drop to refresh my thirst ; that so I may not be wholly dried up. And though I be not altogether Heavenly, nor so inflamed as the *Cherubins* and *Seraphins*, notwithstanding I will endeavor to apply my self to devotion, and prepare my heart to obtain some small spark of divine fire, by humble receiving of this enlivening Sacrament. And whatsoever is hereunto wanting in me, good Jesus, most holy Saviour, do thou supply for me, most bountifully and graciously, who hast vouchsafed to call us unto thee, saying, Come unto me all ye that labor and are burdened, and I will refresh you.

5. I indeed labor in the sweat of my brows, I am vexed with grief of heart, I am burdened with sins, I am troubled with temptations, I am intangled and oppressed with many evill passions; and there is none to help me, none to deliver and save me, but thou, O Lord, my Saviour, to whom I commit my self, and all that is mine, that thou mayest

mayest keep me and bring me to life everlasting. Receive me to the honor and glory of thy Name, who hast prepared thy Body and Blood to be my meat and drink. Grant, Lord God, my Saviour, that by frequenting thy mysteries, the zeal of my devotion may increase.

CHAP. V.

Of the dignity of this Sacrament, and Ministerial function.

The voice of Christ.

IF thou hadst Angelical purity, and the sanctity of St. John Baptist, thou wert not worthy to receive this Sacrament. For it is not within the compass of the deserts of Men, that Man should consecrate the Sacrament of Christ, and receive for food the Bread of Angels. A great mystery, and great is the dignity of the Ministers of God, to whom is given that which is not given to the Angels. It is proper for Ministers rightly instituted in the Church, to have power to celebrate, and consecrate the Body of Christ. The Priest is the Minister

nister of God, using the word of God, by Gods Commandment and appointment; but God is there the principal Author, and invincible Worker; to whom is subject all that he pleaseth, and all that he commandeth doth obey.

2. Thou oughtest therefore more to believe God Almighty in this most excellent Sacrament, than thine own sense, or any visible sign. And therefore thou art to come unto this mystery with fear and reverence. Consider attentively with thy self, and see what that is, whereof the Ministry is delivered unto thee by the imposition of the hands of the Bishop. Behold thou art made a Priest, and consecrated to celebrate; see now that in due time thou doest this faithfully and devoutly, and carry thy self so, as thou mayest be without reproof. Thou hast not lightned thy burden, but art now bound with a straiter band of discipline, and art obliged to a more perfect degree of sanctity. A Minister ought to be adorned with all graces, and to give example of good life to others. His conversation should not be according to the ordinary and common course of Men, but like to the Angels in Heaven; or to perfect Men on Earth.

3. A Minister is the Vicegerent of Christ, to pray humbly with a prostrate mind unto God for himself and the whole People. Neither ought he to cease from prayer till he obtain grace and mercy. When a Minister doth celebrate, he honoreth God, rejoyceth the Angels, edifieth the Church, helpeth the living; and maketh himself partaker of all good.

C H A P. VI.

An interrogation of the exercise before Communion.

The voice of the Disciple.

WHEN I weigh thy worthiness, O Lord, and my unworthiness, I tremble, and am confounded in my self. For if I come not unto thee, I fly from life; and if I unworthily intrude my self, I incur thy displeasure. What therefore shall I do my God, my helper, and my counsellor, in necessity?

2. Teach me the right way, appoint me some exercise futable to this holy Communion. For it is good for me to know
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how I should reverently and religiously prepare my heart for thee, for the profitable receiving of thy Sacrament, or for the celebrating of so great and divine a Sacrifice.

C H A P. VII.

Of the discussing of our own conscience and purpose of amendment.

The voice of the beloved.

Above all things, The Minister of God ought to come to celebrate, and receive this Sacrament with great humility of heart, and lowly reverence, with a full faith, and a pious intending of the honor of God. Examine diligently thy conscience, and to thy power purge and cleanse it with true contrition and humble confession; so as there may be nothing in thee, that may be burdensome unto thee, or that may breed in thee remorse of conscience, and hinder thy free access. Repent thee of all thy sins in general, and in particular bewail and lament thy daily offences. And if thou hast time, confess

unto God in the secret of thy heart, *all the evils of thy *disordered* passions.

2. Lament and grieve, that thou art yet so carnal, so worldly, so unmortified in thy passions, so full of the motions of concupiscence, so unwatchful over thy outward senses, so often intangled with many vain fantasies, so vehemently inclined to outward things, so negligent in the interior, so prone to laughter and immodesty, so indisposed to tears and compunction, so prompt to ease and pleasures of the flesh, so dull to strictness and life of zeal, so curious to hear news and see glorious sights, so slack to imbrace what is humble and low, so covetous of abundance, so niggardly in giving, so fast in keeping, so inconsiderate in speech, so unbridled to silence, so loose in manners, so importune in action, so greedy to meat, so deaf to the word of God, so hasty to rest, so slow to labor, so watchful to tales, so drowsie to watch in the service of God, so hasty to the end thereof, so inconstant in attention, so cold in Prayer, so undevout in celebrating, so dry in receiving, so quickly distracted, so seldom wholly gathered into thy self, so suddenly moved to anger, so
apt

apt to take displeasure against another, so prone to judge, so severe to reprehend, so joyful in prosperity, so weak in adversity, so often purposing much good, and yet performing little.

3. These and other thy defects being confessed, and bewailed with sorrow and great dislike of thine own infirmity, make a firm purpose always to amend thy life, and to endeavor still after a farther progress in holiness. Then with full resignation, and with thy whole will, do thou to the honor of my Name, offer up thy self a perpetual sacrifice on the Altar of thy heart, faithfully committing thy body and soul unto me, that so thou mayest come worthily to celebrate this Eucharistical sacrifice, and to receive profitably the Sacrament of my body.

4. For Man hath no oblation more worthy, nor greater, for the destroying of sin, than to offer up himself unto God purely and wholly in the holy Communion. And when a Man shall have done what lieth in him, and shall be truly penitent, and shall come to me for pardon and grace, as I live, saith the Lord, who will not the death of a sinner, but rather that he be converted and

live, I will not remember his sins any more, but they shall be all forgiven him.

CHAP. VIII.

Of the oblation of Christ on the Cross and resignation of our selves.

The voice of the Beloved.

AS I willingly offered up my self unto God my Father for thy sins, my hands being stretched forth on the Cross, and my body naked, so that nothing remained in me that was not wholly turned into a sacrifice for the appeasing of the divine Majesty; so oughtest thou also to offer up thy self willingly unto me every day, as a pure and holy oblation, with all thy might and affections, in as hearty a manner as thou canst. What do I require of thee more, than that thou entirely resign thy self unto me? Whatsoever thou givest besides thy self, is of little account in my sight, for I seek not any gift of thine, but thy self.

2. As it would not suffice thee to have
all

all things whatsoever, besides me; so neither can it please me, whatsoever thou givest, if thou offerest not thy self. Offer up thy self unto me, and give thy self wholly for God, and thy offering shall be acceptable. Behold I offered up my self wholly unto my Father for thee, and gave my whole body and blood for thy food, that I might be wholly thine, and thou remain mine. But if thou abidest in thy self, and dost not offer thy self up freely unto my will; thy oblation is not entire, neither will the union between us be perfect. Therefore a free offering up of thy self into the hands of God, ought to go before all thy actions, if thou wilt obtain freedom and grace. For this cause so few become inwardly free and illuminated, for that they are loth wholly to deny themselves. My saying is undoubtedly true, *unless a Man forsake all, he cannot be my Disciple.* If thou therefore desirest to be my Disciple, offer up thy self unto me with thy whole affections.

C H A P. IX.

*That we ought to offer up our selves, and
all that is ours unto God, and to
pray for all.*

The voice of the Disciple.

THine, O Lord, are all things that are in Heaven, and in Earth. I desire to offer up my self unto thee, as a free oblation, and to remain always thine. O Lord, in the simplicity of my heart I offer my self unto thee this day, for a sacrifice of a perpetual praise, to be thy Servant for ever. Receive me with this holy oblation of thy precious body; and may this be for my good and the good of all thy People.

2. I offer unto thee, O Lord, all my sins and offences, which I have committed before thee and thy holy Angels, from the day wherein I first could sin, to this hour, upon thy merciful altar; that thou mayest consume and burn them all with the fire of thy love, and wash out all the stains of my sins, and cleanse my conscience from all offences, and restore to me again thy
grace,

grace, which I lost by sin, forgiving me all my offences, and receiving me mercifully to the kiss of peace.

3. What can I do with my sins, but humbly confess and bewail them, and intreat always thy favor? I beseech thee, hear me graciously, when I stand before thee my God. All my sins are very displeasing unto me. I will never commit them any more; but I bewail, and will bewail them as long as I live, and am purposed to repent and according to my utmost power to please thee. Forgive me, O God, forgive me my sins for thy holy Names sake; save my soul which thou hast redeemed with thy most precious blood. Behold I commit my self unto thy mercy, I resign my self into thy Hands. Do with me according to thy goodness, not according to my wickedness and iniquity.

4. I offer up also unto thee all whatsoever is good in me, although it be very little and imperfect, that thou mayest amend and sanctify it, that thou mayest make it grateful and acceptable unto thee, and always perfect it more and more; and bring me also, who am a slothful and unprofit-

profitable creature, to a good and blessed end.

5. I offer up also unto thee all the godly desires of pious persons, the necessities of parents, friends, brethren, sisters, and of all those that are dear unto me, and that have done good either to my self or to others for thy love, and that have desired and begged of me to pray for them and all theirs; that they all may receive the help of thy grace and comfort, protection from dangers, deliverance from pain; and being freed from all evils, may joyfully give worthy thanks unto thee.

6. I offer up also unto thee my Prayers, especially for them who have in any thing wronged, grieved, or slandered me, or have done me any damage or displeasure; and for those also, whom I have at any time sadded, troubled, grieved, and scandalized by words or deeds, wittingly or at unawares, that it may please thee to forgive us all our sins and offences, one against another. Take, O Lord, from our hearts all jealousy, indignation, wrath, and contention, and whatsoever may hurt charity, and lessen brotherly love. Have mercy, O Lord, have mercy on those that crave thy

thy mercy; giue grace unto them that stand in need thereof, and grant that we may be counted worthy to enjoy thy grace, and attain to life everlasting, *Amen.*

C H A P. X

*That the holy communion is not lightly to be
forborn.*

The voice of the beloved.

THou oughtest often to have recourse to the Fountain of grace and of diuine mercy, to the Fountain of goodness and of all benignity; that thou maist be healed of thy sins and passions, and be made more strong and vigilant against all the temptations and deceits of the Devil. The enemy knowing the great good and advantage which comes by the holy Communion, endeavoreth by all means and occasions to withdraw and hinder faithful and pious persons from it.

2. Some when they purpose to fit themselves for the holy Communion, suffer worse assaults of the Devil. For that wicked spirit (as it is written in *Job*) cometh
eth

eth amongst the sons of God, to trouble them according to his accustomed malice, or to make them over fearful and perplexed, that so he may diminish their affection, or by subtile assaults take away their faith, to the end they may either altogether forbear the Communion, or at least come unto it but coldly. But there is no heed to be taken of his frauds and suggestions, be they never so filthy and hideous, but all is to be turned back upon his own head. Thou oughtest to contemn and scorn him a miserable wretch, and not to omit the holy Communion for his assaults, and the troubles which he raiseth.

3. Oftentimes also an excessive care for the obtaining such a degree of devotion, and some anxiety about confessing thy sins hindereth thee. Follow herein the counsel of the wise, and put away all doubt and scruple; for it is an hindrance to the grace of God, and prejudiceth the devotion of the mind. For every small vexation and trouble omit not the holy Communion, but the sooner confess thy sins, and willingly forgive others whatsoever offences they have done against thee; and if thou hast offended any, humbly crave
pardon

pardon, and God will readily forgive thee.

4. What availeth it to delay long the confession of thy sins, or to defer the holy Communion? Purge thy self with speed, spit out the venome presently, make hast to apply this soveraign remedy, and thou shalt find it to be better with thee, than if thou deferredst it long. If thou omittest it to day for this cause, perhaps to morrow some greater will fall out; and so thou maist be hindred a long time from the Communion, and become more unfit. With all possible speed shake off from thy self all present heaviness and sloth, for it will not avail thee to continue long in disquietness and trouble of mind, and for daily occurring impediments to withdraw thy self from the divine mysteries. Yea it is very prejudicial to defer the Communion long, for this usually causeth a greater dulness and undisposedness. Alas, some cold and dissolute people do willingly delay confession and defer the sacred Communion, lest they should be engaged to the greater watch over themselves.

5. O how little is their charity, and how weak is their devotion, that so easily omit the

the holy Communion ! How happy is he and acceptable to God, who so ordereth his life, and keepeth his conscience in such purity, that he is ready and fit to communicate every day, if it were convenient and might be done without others taking notice. If one doth sometimes abstain out of humility, or by reason of some lawful impediment, he is to be commended for the reverence which therein he sheweth. But if it proceedth of dull slothfulness, he must stir himself up, and do what lieth in him, and God will assist his desire for the good will he hath thereto, which God doth chiefly respect.

6. And when any lawful hindrance doth happen, he must yet always have that good will, and a pious intention to communicate, and so shall he not lose the fruit of the Sacrament. For every good Man may every day and hour profitably and without let receive Christ spiritually ; and yet on certain daies, and at time appointed he ought to receive Sacramentally with an affectionate reverence the body of his Redeemer, and rather seek the honor and glory of God, than his own comfort. For he communicateth mystically and is invisibly,

sibly, as often as he devoutly calleth to mind the myſterie of the Incarnation, and the Paſſion of Chriſt, and is inflamed with his love.

7. He that prepareth not himſelf, but when a Feſtival draweth near, and when cuſtome compelleth him thereunto, ſhall uſually be found to be unprepared for it. Bleſſed is he that offereth himſelf up as a Sacrifice to the Lord, as often as he doth celebrate or communicate. Be not too long, nor too ſhort in celebrating, but keep the accuſtomed manner of thole with whom thou liveſt. Thou oughteſt not to be tedious and troubleſom to others, but to obſerve the received cuſtom, according to the appointment of thy Superiors; and rather frame thy ſelf to the profit of others, than to thine own devotion or deſire.

C H A P. XI.

That the Body of Christ, and the holy Scriptures, are most necessary unto a faithful soul.

The voice of the Disciple:

O Sweetest Lord Jesus, how great sweetness hath an holy soul that feareth with thee in thy banquet, where there is set no other food to be eaten but thy self, her only beloved, and most to be desired above all the desires of her heart! And verily it should be a sweet thing unto me to pour out tears from the very bottom of my heart in thy presence; and with holy *Magdalene* to wash thy feet with my tears. But where is this devotion? Where is there any so plentiful shedding of holy tears? Surely in the sight of thee and thy holy Angels, my whole heart should be inflamed and even weep for joy. For I enjoy thee in the Sacrament truly present, though hidden under another representation.

2. For to behold thee in thine own divine brightness, mine eyes would not be able

able to endure it, neither could the whole world stand in the brightness of the glory of thy Majesty. I do really enjoy and adore him, whom the Angels adore in Heaven; but I, as yet in the mean time, by faith, they by sight, and without a veil. I ought to be content with the light of true faith, and to walk therein, until the day of everlasting brightness break forth, and the shadowes of figures pass away. But when that shall come which is perfect, the use of Sacraments shall cease. For the blessed in Heavenly glory need not any Sacramental remedy, but rejoyce without end in the presence of God, beholding his glory face to face, and being transformed from glory to glory into the Image of the incomprehensible Deity, they tast the word of God made flesh, as he was from the beginning; and as he remaineth for ever.

3. Whilest I mind these wonderful things, even all spiritual comfort whatsoever becometh tedious unto me; for that as long as I behold not my Lord openly in his glory, I make no account at all of whatsoever I see or hear in this world. Thou art my witness, O God, that nothing can

comfort me, no creature can give me rest, but thou my God, whom I desire to behold everlastingly. But this is not possible whilst I remain in this mortal life. Therefore I must frame my self to much patience, and submit my self to thee in all my desires. For thy Saints also, O Lord, who now rejoyce with thee in the Kingdom of Heaven, whilst they lived, expected in faith and great patience the coming of thy glory. What they believed, I believe; what they hoped for, I also hope for; whither they are come, I trust I shall come by thy grace. In the mean time I will go forward in faith, strengthened by the examples of the Saints; I have also godly books for my comfort and for the glasse of my life, and above all these, thy most holy body for a singular remedy and refuge.

4. For I perceive Two things to be chiefly necessary for me in the life without which this miserable life would be unsupportable unto me. Whilst I am kept in the prison of this body, I acknowledge my self to stand in need of Two things, to wit, food, and light. Thou hast therefore given unto me a weak creature, thy sacred Body for the nourishment of my soul and

body; and thou hast set thy word as a light unto my feet; without these Two I could not well live. For the word of God is the light of the soul, and thy Sacrament, the bread of life. These also may be called the Two Tables set on the one side and the other, in the store-house of the holy Church. One is the holy Table having the holy bread, that is, the precious body of Christ; the other is that of the divine Law, containing holy Doctrine, teaching the true faith, and certainly leading to that within the veil, where is the holy of Holies. Thanks be unto thee Lord Jesus, the light of everlasting light, for the table of holy Doctrine, which thou hast afforded us by thy Servants, the Prophets and Apostles and other Teachers.

5. Thanks be unto thee, Creator and Redeemer of Man, who to manifest thy love to the whole world, hast prepared a great supper wherein thou hast set before us to be eaten (not the typical Lamb, but) thine own most sacred Body and Blood, rejoicing all the faithful with thy holy banquet, and replenishing them to the full with thy Cup of salvation, in which are all the delights of Paradise; and the holy

Angels do feast with us, but yet with a more happy sweetness.

6. O how great and honorable is the office of Gods Ministers, to whom it is given with sacred words to consecrate (the Sacrament of) the Lord of glory; with their lips to bless, with their hands to hold, with their mouth to receive, and also to administer to others ! O how clean ought to be those hands, how pure that mouth, how holy that body, how unspotted that heart, where the Author of purity so often entreth ! Nothing but what is holy, no word but good and profitable ought to proceed from his mouth, which so often receiveth the Sacrament of Christ.

7. Simple and chaste ought to be the eyes that use to behold the body of Christ; the hands pure and lifted up to Heaven, that use to receive the Creator of Heaven and Earth. Unto the Priests especially it is said in the Law, be ye holy for that I your Lord God am holy.

8. Assist us, Almighty God, with thy grace, that we who have undertaken the office of Priest-hood, may serve thee worthily and devoutly in all purity, and with a good conscience. And if we live not in
so

so great innocency as we ought to do, grant us notwithstanding in due manner to bewail the sins which we have committed; and in the spirit of humility and with the full purpose of a good will to serve thee hereafter more fervently.

C H A P. XII.

That he who is to communicate ought to prepare himself with great diligence.

The voice of the beloved.

I Am the lover of purity, and the giver of all sanctity. I seek a pure heart, and there is the place of my rest. Make ready and adorn for me the great Chamber, and I will keep with thee the Passover amongst my Disciples. If thou wilt have me come unto thee, and remain with thee; purge out the old leaven, and make clean the habitation of thy heart; shut out the whole world, and all the throng of sins; sit like a sparrow solitary upon the house-top, and think of thy offences in the bitterness of thy soul. For every lover prepareth the best and fairest room for his beloved; and

herein is known the affection of him that entertaineth his beloved.

2. Know thou notwithstanding, that the merit of no action of thine is able to make this preparation sufficient, although thou shouldest prepare thy self a whole year together, and think on nothing else. Thou art of my mere grace and favor suffered to come to my Table, like a beggar invited to dinner to a rich Man, who hath nothing else to return him for his benefits, but to humble himself and give him thanks. Do what lieth in thee, and do it diligently; not for custome, not for necessity, but with fear and reverence, and affection; receive the body of thy beloved Lord God, who vouchsafeth to come unto thee. I am he that have called thee, I have commanded it to be done, I will supply what is wanting in thee; come and receive me.

3. When I bestow the grace of devotion, give thanks to thy God; for it is given thee, not for that thou art worthy, but because I have mercy on thee. If thou have it not, but rather dost feel thy self dry; continue in Prayer, sigh and knock, and give not over until thou art meet to receive some crum or drop of saving grace.
Thou

Thou hast need of me, not I of thee, neither comest thou to sanctifie me, but I come to sanctifie and make thee better. Thou comest that thou maist be sanctified by me, and united unto me, that thou maist receive new grace, and be stirred up again to amendment. Neglect not this grace, but prepare thy heart with all diligence, and receive thy beloved into thy soul.

4. But thou oughtest not only to prepare thy self to devotion before Communion, but carefully also to conserve thy self therein, after thou hast received the Sacrament. Neither is the careful guard of thy self afterwards less required, than devout preparation before. For a good guard afterwards, is the best preparation again for the obtaining of greater grace; because that a Man becometh therefore very indisposed, if he presently pour himself out overmuch to outward comforts. Beware of much talk, remain in some secret place, and enjoy thy God. For thou hast him, whom all the world cannot take from thee. I am he, to whom thou oughtest wholly to give thy self, thatso thou maist live hereafter, not in thy self, but in me, without all solicitude.

C H A P. XIII.

That a devout soul ought to desire with her whole heart, to be united unto Christ in the Sacrament.

The voice of the Disciple.

HOW may I obtain this, O Lord, that I may find thee alone, and open my whole heart unto thee, and enjoy thee as my soul desireth? And that no Man may look towards me, nor any creature move me or eye me, but thou alone maist speak unto me, and I to thee, as the beloved is wont to speak to his beloved, and a friend to banquet with his friend? This I pray for, this I desire, that I may be wholly united unto thee, and may withdraw my heart from all created things, and more and more by sacred Communion and often celebrating, learn to relish Heavenly and eternal things. O Lord God, when shall I be wholly united to thee, and absorpt by thee, and be altogether forgetful of my self? Thou in me, and I in thee, and so grant us both to continue in one.

2. Thou art truly my beloved, the choicest

choicest amongst Thousands, in whom my soul is well pleased to dwell all the days of her life. Thou art indeed my peacemaker, in whom is greatest peace and true rest, without whom is labor and sorrow and infinite misery. Thou art indeed a God that hidest thy self, and thy counsel is not with the wicked, but thy speech is with the humble and simple of heart. O Lord, how sweet is thy spirit, who to the end thou mightest shew thy sweetness toward thy Children, vouchsafest to feed them with the bread which descendeth from Heaven, and is full of all sweetness! Surely there is no other Nation so great, that hath God nigh unto them, as thou our God art present to all thy faithful ones, unto whom for their daily comfort, and for the raising up of their hearts to Heaven, thou givest thy self to be eaten and enjoyed.

3. For what other Nation, is there so famous, as the Christian People? or what creature under heaven so beloved, as a religious soul to whom God himself cometh to feed her with his glorious flesh? O unspeakable grace! O admirable condescendent! O infinite love singularly bestowed upon Man!

Man! But what shall I give unto the Lord in return of his grace, for so eminent an expression of thy love? There is no other thing more acceptable that I am able to give, than to give my heart wholly to my God, and to unite it most inwardly unto him. Then shall all my inward parts rejoyce, when my soul shall be perfectly united unto God. Then he will say unto me; if thou wilt be with me, I will be with thee. And I will answer him, Vouchsafe, O Lord, to remain with me, and I will gladly be with thee. This is my whole desire, that my heart be united unto thee.

C H A P. XIV.

*Of the fervent desire of some devout Persons,
to receive the Body of Christ.*

The voice of the Discipie.

O How great is thy goodness O Lord, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee! When I remember some devout persons who come unto thy Sacrament, O Lord, with greatest devotion and affection, I am oftentimes confounded and
blush

blush within my self, that I come so formally and coldly to thy Table of the holy Communion, that I remain so dry, and without heart affection, That I am not wholly inflamed in thy presence, my God, nor so earnestly drawn and affected, as many devout persons have been, who out of a vehement desire of the Communion, and a feeling affection of heart, could not contain themselves from weeping; but with the desire both of soul and body, they earnestly longed after thee, O God the living Fountain, being not otherwise able to allay nor satisfy their hunger, but by receiving thy body with all joy and spiritual greediness.

2. O the most ardent faith of those persons! A clear argument of thy sacred presence. For they truly know their Lord in the breaking of bread, whose heart burneth so mightily within them, whilst thou, O blessed Jesus, conversest with them. Such desire and devotion, so vehement love and fervency, is oftentimes far from me. Be merciful unto me good Jesus, sweet and gracious Lord, and grant me thy poor needy creature, to feed sometimes, at least in this holy Communion, some:

somewhat of thy hearty affectionate love, that my faith may be more strengthened, my hope in thy goodness increased, and that my charity once perfectly enflamed, after the tasting of Heavenly Manna, may never decay.

3. Thy mercy, O Lord, is able to give me the grace I desire, and to visit me most mercifully with the spirit of fervor, when it shall please thee. For although I burn not with so great desire as those that are so singularly devoted to thee; yet notwithstanding by thy grace, I desire to have this great inflamed desire, praying and craving that I may participate with all such thy fervent lovers, and be numbred among them in their holy company.

CHAP. XV.

That the grace of devotion is obtained by humility and denial of our selves.

The voice of the Beloved.

THou oughtest to seek the grace of devotion instantly, to ask it earnestly, to expect it patiently and with confidence
to

to receive it gratefully, to keep it humbly, to work with it diligently, and to commit the term and manner of this Heavenly visitation to God, until it shall please him to come unto thee. Thou oughtest chiefly to humble thy self, when thou feelest inwardly little or no devotion, and yet not to be too much dejected, nor to grieve inordinately. God often giveth in a short moment, that which he hath long time denied; he giveth sometimes in the end, that which in the beginning of prayer he deferred to grant.

2. If grace should be always presently given, and at hand ever with a wish, the weak Man could not well bear it. Therefore the grace of devotion is to be expected with good hope and humble patience; yet impute it to thy self and thy sins, when it is not given thee, or when it is secretly taken away. It is sometimes a small matter that hindereth and hideth grace *from us*, if yet it be to be called small, and not rather a great matter, that hindereth so great a good. And if thou remove this, be it great or small, and perfectly overcome it, thou shalt have thy desire.

3. For presently as soon as thou from thy
whole

whole heart givest thy self to God, and seekest not this nor that, for thine own pleasure or will, but settest thy self wholly in him, thou shalt find thy self united and quiet ; for nothing will relish so well, and please thee so much, as the good pleasure of the divine will. Whosoever therefore, with a single heart listeth up his intention to God, and purgeth himself from all inordinate love or dislike of any created thing, he shall be the most fit to receive grace, and meet for the gift of devotion. For the Lord bestoweth his blessings there, where he findeth the vessels empty. And how much the more perfectly one forsaketh these low things, and the more he dieth to himself by contempt of himself, so much the more speedily grace shall come, and enter in more plentifully, and raise up higher the heart that is thus free.

4. Then shall he see, and be filled, and wonder, and his heart shall be enlarged within him, because the hand of the Lord is with him, and he hath put himself wholly into his hands for ever. Behold, so shall the Man be blessed, that seeketh God with his whole heart, and busieth not his soul in vain. This man obtaineth the
great

great favor of divine union, in receiving the holy Eucharist; for that he respecteth not his own devotion and comfort, but above all devotion and comfort, the honor and glory of God.

C H A P. XVI.

That we ought to manifest our necessities to Christ, and crave his grace.

The voice of the Disciple.

O Most sweet, and loving Lord, whom I now desire to receive with all devotion, thou knowest my infirmity and the necessity which I endure, with how many sins and evils I am oppressed, how often I am grieved, tempted, troubled, and defiled. I come unto thee for remedy, I crave of thee comfort and succor; I speak to him that knoweth all things, to whom all my inward parts are open, and who can only perfectly comfort and help me. Thou knowest what good things I stand in most need of, and how poor I am in virtues.

2. Behold, I stand before thee poor and
naked,

naked, calling for grace, and craving mercy. Refresh thy hungry beggar, inflame my coldness with the fire of thy love ; enlighten my blindness with the brightness of thy presence. Turn all earthly things to me into bitterness, all things grievous and cross into patience, all low and created things into contempt and oblivion. Lift up my heart to thee in Heaven, and suffer me not to wander upon Earth. Be thou only sweet unto me from henceforth for evermore ; for thou only art my meat and my drink, my love and my joy, my sweetness and all my good.

3. O that with thy presence thou wouldst wholly inflame, burn and conform me unto thy self ; that I might be made one spirit with thee by the grace of inward union, and by the meltings of ardent love ! Suffer me not to go from thee hungry and dry, but deal mercifully with me, as thou hast oftentimes dealt wonderfully with thy Saints. What marvel is it if I should be wholly inflamed by thee, and die from my self, sith thou art fire always burning and never decaying, love purifying the heart, and enlightning the understanding ?

C H A P. XVII.

*Of fervent love and vehement desire to receive
Christ.*

The voice of the Disciple.

With great devotion and ardent love, with most hearty affection and fervor I desire to receive thee, O Lord, as many Saints and devout persons have desired thee, when they received thy Sacrament who were most pleasing unto thee in holiness of life, and most fervent in devotion. O my God, my everlasting love; my whole good, my happiness without end. I would gladly receive thee with the most vehement desire and most worthy reverence, that any of the Saints ever had, or could feel.

2. And although I be unworthy to have all those feelings of devotion, yet I offer unto thee the whole affection of my heart, as if I alone had all those highly pleasing inflamed desires; yea and whatsoever also an holy mind can conceive and desire; all that, with greatest reverence and most inward affection, I offer and present unto thee.

I desire to reserve nothing to my self, but freely and most willingly to sacrifice my self and all mine unto thee, my Lord God my Creator, and my Redeemer. I desire
• to receive thee this day with such affection, reverence, praise and honor, with such gratitude, worthiness, and love, with such faith, hope, and purity, as thy most holy Mother the glorious Virgin *Mary* received, and desired thee, when she humbly and devoutly answered the Angel, who declared unto her the mystery of the Incarnation, and said, *Behold the handmaid of the Lord, let it be done unto me according to thy word.*

3. And as thy blessed Forerunner, the most excellent amongst the Saints, *John Baptist*, chearfully leaped by reason of the holy Ghost, whilst he was yet shut up in his Mothers womb; and afterwards seeing Jesus walking amongst Men, humbling himself very much, said with devout affection, *The friend of the Bridegroom that standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth with joy for the voice of the Bridegroom;* so I also wish to be inflamed with great and holy desires, and to offer my self up to thee with my whole heart. Wherefore I offer also and
present

present unto thee the joys, fervent affections, mental excesses, and supernal illuminations, and Heavenly visions of all devout hearts, with all the vertues and praises celebrated and to be celebrated by all creatures in Heaven and Earth, for my self, and all such as are commended to me in prayer, that by all thou maist be worthily praised and glorified for ever.

4. Receive, my Lord God, my wishes and desires of giving thee infinite praise and thanks, which according to the measure of thy unspeakable greatness, are most worthily due unto thee. These I yield thee, and desire to yield thee every day and moment. I do entreat and invite all Heavenly minds, and all the devout Servants, to give thanks and praises together with me.

5. Let all People, Tribes, and Tongues praise thee, and magnifie thy holy and sweet Name, with great joy and fervent devotion; and let all that reverently and devoutly celebrate thy most high Sacrament and receive it with full faith, find grace and mercy at thy hands, and pray humbly for me a sinful creature. And when they shall have obtained their desired de-

votion and joyful union, and depart from thy sacred Heavenly Table, well comforted and marvellously refreshed, let them vouchsafe to remember my poor soul.

CHAP. XVIII.

That Man be not a curious searcher of the Sacrament, but an humble follower of Christ, submitting his sense to faith.

The voice of the Beloved.

THOU oughtest to beware of curious and unprofitable searching into this most profound Sacrament, if thou wilt not be plunged in the depths of doubts. He that is a searcher of Majesty, shall be oppressed by thy glory. God is able to work more than Man can understand. A pious and humble inquiry of truth is tolerable, so it be always ready to be taught, and do endeavor to walk in the sound doctrines of the Fathers.

2. Blessed is that simplicity, that forsaketh the difficult ways of questions, and goeth on in the plain and assured path of Gods Commandments. Many have lost devotion,

tion, whilest they would search after high things. Faith and a sincere life required at thy hands, not height of understanding, nor a diving deep into the mysteries of God. If thou dost not understand, nor conceive those things that are under thee, how shalt thou be able to comprehend those that are above thee? Submit thy self to God, and let thy sense be subject to faith; and the light of knowledg shall be given thee in that degree as shall be profitable and necessary for thee.

3. Some are grievously tempted about faith and the Sacrament, but this is not to be imputed to them, but rather to the Enemy. Be not thou anxious nor dispute with thy thoughts, neither do thou give answer to the doubts cast in by the Devil; but believe the words of God, believe his Saints and Prophets, and the wicked Enemy will flie from thee. It is oftentimes very profitable to the Servant of God to suffer such things. For the Devil tempteth not unbelievers and sinners, whom he already securely possesseth, but he sundry ways tempteth and vexeth the faithful and religious.

4. Go forward therefore with a sincere and undoubted faith, and come to the Sacrament

crament with unfeigned reverence. And whatsoever thou art not able to understand, commit securely to Almighty God. God deceiveth thee not ; he is deceived that trusteth to much to himself. God walketh with the simple, revealeth himself to the humble, giveth understanding to the little ones, openeth the sense to pure minds, and hideth grace from the curious and proud. Humane reason is weak, and may be deceived, but true faith cannot be deceived.

5. All reason and natural search ought to follow faith, not to go before, nor infringe it. For faith and love do here chiefly excell, and work in a hidden manner in this most holy and excellent Sacrament. God, who is everlasting and of infinite power, doth great and inscrutable things in Heaven and in Earth, and there is no searching out of his wonderful works. If the works of God were such, as might be easily comprehended by humane reason, they were not to be called wonderful and unspeakable.

FINIS.

